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The Epistle to the Reader

Hou hast here (curteous and frindly Reader) the Pleasant and delightful History of *Reynard* the Fox, which in an humble and low stile (couch- ed to the natures of the Beasts it treateth on) beareth in it much excellent Morality and hidden wisdom, worthy both thy regard in reading, and thine application in the course and commercement of thy life and actions ; for the aime at which it bendeth, is the overthrow of vice, and the advancement of the good and vertuous.

Now for asmuch as hitherto it hath flowne into the world (like *Sibillas's*

The Epistle to the Reader

loose papers) covered with much obscurity and darkenesse; I have for thy more ease and contentment, to every severall Chapter annexed the Morals and Expositions of such darke places, as may hold thy judgement in seeking to wind out of a labyrinth so dark and curions; **A** labour which I doubt not but will prove both pleasant and wholesome, since as a friendly guid it wil keep thy meditations from wandring astray and as a pleasant companion hold thee with such delightful discourse, that thy Journey therein will neither bee long nor irkelome: at which end if it arrive with a faire safety as it is faithfully and truly intended, I have the sum of my wishes, and thy self the prosperity, both of this and other mens indeavours.

Farewell

The



The Pleasant
HISTORY
OF
Reynard the Fox.

CHAP. I.

How the *Lion* Proclaimed a solemn Feast at his Court and
how *Isegrim* the Wolfe and his Wife, and *Curtise* the
Hound, made their first complaints of *Reynard* the Fox.

AND ON the Feast of Pentecost (which is
commonly called Whitsonide) when the
woods are in their lusty hood and gallantry,
and every Tree cloathed in the greene and
white liberty of glorious leaves, and sweet
smelling blossomes, and the earth covered in
her fairest mantle of Flowers, which the Birds with much joy
entertaine with the delight of their harmonious songs.

Then at this time and enterance of the lusty Spring, the
Lion the royall King of Beasts, to celebrate this holy Feast-
time withall triumphant ceremonie, he intends to keep open
Court at his great Palace of Sanden, & to that end (by solemn
Proclamation) makes knowe over all his Kingdome to all
Beast whatsoeuer, that upon paine to be hold contemptuous
every one should resort to that great celebration: so that within
few daies after (at the time prefixed all Beasts both great and
small

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shall come in infinite multitudes to the Court, only Reynard the Fox excepted, who knew himselfe guiltie in so many trespasses against many Beasts, that his coming thither must needs have put his life in great hazard and danger.



Now when the King had assembled all his Court together, there were few Beasts found but made there severall Complaint against the Fox, but especially Isegrim the Wolfe, who being the first and principallest complaint, came with all his Lineage and kindred, and standing before the King, said in this manner.

My bread and dearest Soberaign Lord the King, I humbly beseech you, that from the height and strength of your great power, and the multitude of your mercies, you will be pleased to take pittie on so great trespasses, and unsufferable injuries which that unworthy creature Reynard the Fox hath done to me, my wife and our whole family : of which to give your highness some taste, first know (If it please your Majestie) that this
Reynard

of Reynard the Fox



Reynard, came in my house by violence, and against the will of my wife, where finding my children laid in their quiet couch he there be-pist them in so ranke a manner, that with the sharpnesse of his urine they fell instantly blind, for this offence a day was set and appoynted to here in Reynard should come to excuse himselfe, and to take a solemne oath that he was guiltlesse of that high injurie: but as soone as the booke was tendred before him (he that well knew his stone guiltinesse) refused to sweare, and ran instantly into his hole, both in contempt of your Majesty and your Lokes. This (my dread Lord) many of the noblest Beasts know which now are resident in your Court: For bath this alone bounded his malice, but in many other things he hath trespassed against me, which to relate neither the time nor your highnesse patience would give sufferance thereunto: suffice it, mine injuries are so great that none can exceed them, and the shame and blame he hath done to my wife is such, that I can neither hide nor suffer it unrebenged, but I must expect from him amends, and from your Majesty mercy.

The Morall. Howsoever a vicious man perswades himselfe to escape punishment, by absentiag himself from the presence of the Magistrate yet he deceives himself and by his contempt annoyes his enemies to be more bold in their complaints against him, as appears here

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by the Wolfe who, although worse then the Fox, yet doth he with his absence and the seasonableness of the time for free liberty of speech, take opportunity to say the worst he can against him, and by his example makes others of fearful nature to do the like. And therefore let no wise man shrink from his just trial, but either defend his own innocence, or else submit to mercy, for dead men and absent, find slack Advocates.

When the Wolfe had spoken these words, there stood by him a little Hound whose name was Curtise, who stepping forth, made likewise a grievous complaint (unto the King) against the Fox, saying, that in the extreme cold season of the winter when the frost was most violent, he being halfe starved and detained from all manner of prey, had no more meat left him to sustain his life then one poore Pudding: which Pudding (he said) Reynard had most unjustly taken away from him



of Reynard the Fox.

But the Hound could hardly let these words file from his lips, when with a fierp and angry countenance, in sprang Tibert the Cat amongst them, and falling doونه before the King, said; My Lord the King, I must confesse the Fox is here grieuously complained upon, yet were other Beasts actions searched, each would have enough to do for his own clearing. Touching the complaint of Curtise the Hound, it was an offence committed many years ago, and though I my self complain, of no injury yet was the Wadding mine and not his; for I was it by night out of a Mill when the Miller lay asleep, so that if Curtise could challenge any share thereof, it must be from mine interest.

When Panther heard these words of the Cat, he stood forth and said, Do you imagine, Tibert, that it were a just or a good course that Reynard should not be complained upon? why the whole world knows he is a murtherer, a ravisher and a thief, and that indeed he loveth not truly any creature, no not his Majesty himself, but would suffer his highnesse to lose both Honour and renowne, so that he might thereby attaine to himself but so much as the legge of a fatte Hen: I shall tell you what I saw him do yesterday to Kyward the Hare, that now standeth in the Kings protection, he promised unto Kyward that he would teach him his Credo, and make him a good Chaplaine, he made him come sit between his leggs and sing and cry a loud Credo, Credo: my way late thereby and I heard the song: then coming nearer, I found that Mr. Reynard had left his first note and song, and began to play his old deceit: for he had caught Kyward by the throat, and had I not at that time come, he had taken his life also as you may see by the fresh wound on Kyward at this present. O my Lord the King, if you suffer this unpunished, and let him go quit that hath thus broken your peace, and prophaned your dignity, and doing no right according to the judgement of your Lawes, your Princely chidzen manie yeares hereafter shall bear the slander of his evil. Certainly Panther (said Isegrim) you say true, and it is fit they receive the benefit of Justice that desire to live in peace.

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CHAP. 2.

How Grymbard the Brock, spake for Reynard before the King.

Then spake Grimbard the Broek (that was Reynards sisters Sonne) being much moved with anger: Ifegrim



of Reynard the Fox.

You are malicious, and it is a common Proverb: Malice never
spake wel? what can you say against my kinsman Reynard? *The Morall,*

I would you durst adventure, that which of you had most in-
jured one another, might die the death, and be hanged as a fel-
lon? I tell you, were he here in the Court, and as much in
the things labour as you are, it would be much to little satisfac-
tion for you to aske mercy: you have many times bitten
and torne my kinsman with your venomous teeth, and oftner
much then I can reckon, yet some I will call up to my remem-
brance.

Have you forgot how you cheated him with the Plaise
which he threwe downe from the cart, when you followed a
loose for fear? yet you deboured the good Plaise alone, and gave
him no more but the great bones which you could not eat
your self: the like you did with the fat fitch of Bacon, whose
taste was so good, that your self alone did eat it up, and when
my uncle asked his part, you answered him with scoone,
Faire young man thou shalt have thy share: but he got not any
thing, albeit he wonne the bacon with great fear and hazard
for the stoner came, and caught my kinsman in a sacke, from
whence he hardly escaped with life: many of these injuries
hath I segim done to Reynard, which I beseech your Lordships
judge if they be sufferable: againe he complaineth that my
kinsman hath wronged him in his wife: 'tis true and I con-
fesse Reynard hath laine with her, yet it was seven years
before I segim did wed her, and if my uncle out of courtesie did
her a pleasure, what was that to him? she was soon healed
of the soze, nor ought he to complaine of any thing not belong-
ing to him; wisdome would have concealed it, for what credit
gets he by the slander of his wife, especially when she is una-
griched?

Now comes Kayward the Hare with his complaint, which
to me seeme but a trifle, for if he will learn to read, and read
not his lesson aright, who will blame the Schoole-master Rey-
nard, if he gibe him due correction? for if schoolers be not beaten
and chastised they will never learn.

Lastly complaineth Curtilc, that he with great paine had

The Morall,
Vice is never
without his
advocate, and
be a man never
so lewd, yet
he shall still
finde one or o-
ther to plead
for him, espe-
cially where
there is either
greatnesse or
wealth in the
offendor, or a-
ny allience of
bloud to those
in favour, as
appears here
by the Brock,
which pleads
for the Fox,
first because
he was of his
kin, and next
he was rich &
able to plea-
sure him; last-
ly, here is to
be observed
the insinuation
of the Advo-
cate, excusing
the Foxes
faults with a
new form or
penitence,
cloaking the
ills he had
done with zeal
and hypocri-
sie, then the
which no

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thing sooner
b.ings a good
man to believe
and forgive-
nelle.

gotten a Pudding in the winter, being a season in which bt-
quals are hard: me thinks silence would have become
him better, for he had stolne it: & Male quæstisti, & male per-
didisti, 'tis fit it was evil lost, thas evil wonne, who can blame
Reynard to take stolen goods from a thief; It is reason that
he which understands the Law and can discern right, being
of great and high birth as my kinsman is, do right unto the
law. Nay had he hanged up Curtille when he took him with the
manner, he had offended none but the King in doing Justice
without leafe; wherefore for respect to his Majestie he did it
not, though he reape little thanks for his labour: alas how
do these complaints hurt him; mine uncle is a Gentleman
and a true man, nor can he endure falsehood, he doth nothing
without the counsell of the Priest: and I affirme, since my
Lord the King proclaimed his peace, he never thought to hurt
any man: for he eateth but once a day, he lieth as a Wecusse,
he chastiseth his body, and weareth a shirt of haire-cloth: it is
above a year since he eat any flesh (as I have been truly in-
formed by them which came but yesterday from him) he hath
for taken his Castle Malepardus, and abandoned all rovaltie,
a poore hermitage retaines him, hunting he hath forsworne, and
his wealth he hath scattered, living onely by almes and good
mens charities; doing infinite penance for his sins, so that he
is become pale and leane with praying, and fasting, for he
would faine be with God.

Thus whilst Grimberd his nephew stood preaching, they
perceivd coming down the hill unto them, stout Chante-
cleere the Cock, who brought upon a Beere a dead Hen, of
whom Reycard had bitten off the head, and was brought to
the King to have knowledge therfore.

CHAP. 3.

How Chanteclere the Cock complained of Reynard
the Foxe.

CHANTECLEERE marched foremost, smote pitiously his
hands and feathers, whilst on the other side the Beere went
two

of Reynard the Fox.



two forsoothfull Hens, the one was Tantart, the other the good
Hen Cragant, being two of the fairest Hens between Hol-
land and Arden: these Hens bore each of them a straight bright
burning Taper, and these Hennes were sisters to Coppell
(which lay dead on the Bære) and in the marching they cried
piteously, alack and well-a-day for the death of Coppell our

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The Morall.

When wicked men cannot compasse their wickednesse by strong hand, or violence against their enemies; then they study deceits and shifts to entangle them: of all which none is so powerfull as the shew of Religion: for that working upon the easie beliefe of the simple, makes them many times shippe themselves into the rough Seas whence there is no help but shipwrack, as the foolish Cock did to believe the subtil Fox. Also in this a man may see, that though an evill man may be now and then excused of some faults, yet still his finnes will so dog him at the heels that

dear sister. Two young Hens bare the beere, which cackled so heabily, and wept so loud for the death of Coppel their mother, that the hills gave aneccha to their clamour: thus being come befoze the King, Chanteclere kneeling down, spake in this manner.

Most mercifull and my great Lord the King, bouchsafe, I beseech you, to hear our complaint, and redress those injuries which Reynard hath unjustly done to me, and my children that here stand weeping; for so it is (most mighty Sir) that in the beginning of Aprill, when the weather was faire, I being then at the height of my pride and glory, because of the great stock and lineage I came of, and also in that I had eight battent sonnes, and seven faire daughters, which my wife had hatched, all which were strong and fat, and walked in a yard well walled and fenced round about, wherein they had in severall sheds for their guard, sixe stout massise Dogges, which had toze the skinnes of many wild Beasts, so that my children feared not any evil which might happen unto them: But Reynard, that false and dissembling traytoze, enbying their happy fortune because of their safety, many times assailed the walles, and gave such dangerous assaults, that the Dogges divers times were let forth unto him and hunted him away; yea once they light upon him, and bit him, and made him pay the price for his theft, and his toze skinne witnessed, yet neverthelesse he escaped, the more was the pittie; yet we were quit of his trouble a great while after: at last he came in the likeness of an Hermite, and brought me a Letter to read, sealed with your majesties Seale, in which I found written, that your Highnesse had made peace throughout all your Realme, and that no manner of Beasts or Fowle should doe injurie one to another, affirming unto me, that for his own part he was become a Monk or Cloistered Recluse, bowing to perform a daily penance for his finnes; shewing unto me his beads, his bookes, and the haire shirt next to his skinne, saying in humble wise unto me, Sir Chaunteclere, never herne-forth be afraid of me, for I have bowed never more to the heels that eat flesh.

I am

of Reynard the Fox.



in the end he
shall be disco-
vered and lie
to open Law
and punish-
ment, as now
it happened to
the Fox, no-
withstanding
the Brecks ex-
cuse and main-
tenance.

I am now very old, and could only remember my life,
therefore I take my leave: for I have yet my noon and my
even-song to say: which spake, he departed, saying his Credo
as he went, and layed him down under a Hawthorne: at this
I was exceeding glad, that I took no heed, but went and
cloaked my children together, and walked without the wall,
which

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which I shall eber rue, for false Reynard lying under a bush came creeping betwixt us and the gare: and suddainly surprized one of my children, which he trust up in his male and bore away to my great sorrow, for habing tasted the sweetnesse of our flesh, neither hunter, nor hound, can protect or keepe him from us: night and day he waits upon us with that greedynesse, that of fifteen of my children, he hath left me but four unslayn, breered, and yesterday Coppell my daughter (which here lieth dead on this bare) was (after her murder) by a kennel of hounds rescued from him: This is my complaint, and this I leave to your highnesse mercy to take pittie of me, and the losse of my fair children.

CHAP. 4.

The Kings answer to the *Cocks* complaint, and how they sung the *Dirge*.

The Morall.

Here those that excuse bad actions, may see how such offences return to disgrace, because evill mens vices being disclosed, the excuses are their shames: that make them, as it hapned now to the Brock Also in the Lyon may be seen the effects of a good disposition, which is exprest in the

Then spake the King sir Grimbard, hear you this of your uncle the Recluse? he hath fasted and prayed well: well, believe it, if I live a year, he shall dearly abide it: as for you Chantecleere, your complaint is heard and shall be cured: to your daughter that is dead, we will give her the right of burial, and with solemne Dirges bring her to the earth with worship; which finished, we will consult with our Lord, how to do you right and Justice against the murderer. Then began the Placedo Domine with all the verses belonging to it, which are too many to recite: and as soon as the Dirge was done, the bodie was enterred, and upon it a faire Marble stone laid, being polished as bright as glasse; in which was engraven in great letters this inscription following, Coppell Chantecleers daughter whom Reynard the Fox hath slain lieth here buried; mourn thou that readeest it for her death was unjust and lamentable. After this the King sent for his Lords and wisest Councellores to consult how this foule murder of Reynards might be punished. In the end it was concluded that Reynard should be sent for, and without all excuse to appear before the King to answer these trespasses should

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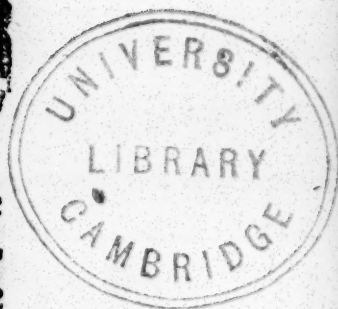


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 and how
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 such imploy-
 ments mis-
 carry

should be objected against him, and that this message should be
 delibered by Bruine the Beare : to all this the King gave con-
 sent, & calling him befoze him, said, sir Bruine, it is our pleasure
 that you deliber this message, yet in the delibery thereof have
 great regard to your selfe, for Reynard is full of policy, and
 knoweth how to dissemble, flatter and betray, he hath a world
 of snares to intangle you withall, and without great exercise
 of judgment, will make a scozne and mock of the best wisome

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breathing. ~~My~~ Lord (answered Sir Bruine) let me alone with Raynard, I am not such a truant in discretion to become a mock to his knavery: and thus full of jolly the Bear departed: if his returne be as joviall, there is no feare in his well speeding.

CHAP. 5.

How Bruine the Beare sped with Reynard the Fox



of Reynard the Fox:

THE next morning away went Bruine the Beare in quest of the fox, armed against all plots of deceit whatsoever, and as he came through a darke Forrest, in which Reynard had a by-path, which he used when he was hunted, he saw a high mountaine, over which he must passe to goe to Malepardus: for though Reynard had many houses, yet Malepardus is his chiefe and most ancient Castle, and in it he lay both for defence and ease: Now at last when Bruine was come to Malepardus, he found the gates close shut, at which after he had knocked (sitting on his taile) he called aloud. Sir Reynard are you at home? I am Bruine your kinsman, whom the King hath sent to summon you to the Court, to answer many foule accusations exhibited against you, and hath taken a great holt, that if you faile to appeare to this summon, that your life shall answer you contempt, and your goods and honours shall lye confiscate at his Highnes mercy: Wherefore faire kinsman, hee advised by your friend, and goe with me to the Court to stunne the danger that else will fall upon you. Reynard lying close by the gate (as his custome was for the warme Sonne sake) hearing those wordes, departed into one of his holes, for Malepardus is full of many intricat and curious lcomes, (which labyrinth-like hee could passe thereto, when either his danger or the benefit of any pray required the same) where meditating awhile with himselfe how he might counterplot and bring the Bear to disgrace (whom he knew loved him not) and himselfe to honour, at last he came forth, and said, Deare uncle Bruine, you are exceeding welcome, pardon my slownesse in comming; for at your first speech I was saying my Oben-song: and devotion must not be neglected: Hele me, hee hath done you no good service, nor doe I thinke him which hath sent you this weary and long journey, in which your much sweat and toyle, farre exceeds the worth of the labour: certainly had you not come, I had to morrow bene at the Court of mine owne accord, yet at this time my to Morrow is much lessened, in as much as your counsaile at this present may returne mee double benefit. Alas cousin, could his Majestie find no meaner a

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messenger then your noble selfe to imploy in these tribiaffaires: truly it appeares strange to me: especially since next his royall selfe, you are of greatest renowne both in blood and riches: for my part I wold we were both at Court, for I feare our journey will be exceeding troublesome: for to speak troth, since I made mine abstinence from flesh, I have eaten such strange new meats, that my body is very much distempered and swelleth as if it would breake. Alas deare Cousin (said the Beare) what meat is that which maketh you so ill? Uncle (answered he) what will it profit you to know? the meat was simple and meane; we poore men are no Lords, you know, but eat that for necessity, which others eat for wantonnesse: yet not to delay you; that which I eat was honey-combes, great, full, and most pleasant, which compelled by hunger, I eat too unmeasurably, and am thereby infinitely distempered. Ha (quoth Bruine) honey-combes? doe you make such slight respect of them. Rephebe? why it is meat for the greatest Emperour in the world: faire Rephebe

The Morall.

In this encounter between the Fox and the Beare, is exprest the dissimulation of two wicked persons, each plotting to do the other

of Reynard the Fox.

pheto; help mee but to some of that honey, and command mee whilst I live; for one little part thereof, I will be your servant euerlastingly. Sure said the Fox (Uncle) you but jest with me: But jest with you (replied Bruine) be shew to my heart then for I am in that serious earnest, that for one lick therat you shall make me the faithfullst of all your kindred. Nay (said the Fox) if you be in earnest, then know I will bring you where so much is, that ten of you shall not be able to devour it at a meale, onely for your love sake, which aboue all things I desire, Uncle. But ten of us (said the Beare?) it is impossible: for had I all the honey betwixt Hibla and Portugall, yet I could in a short space eat it all my selfe. Then know Uncle (quoth the Fox) that nere at hand here dwelith a husbandman named Lanfert, who is master of so much honey that you cannot consume in seven yeres, which for your love and friendship sake I will put into your safe possession. Bruine made upon the honey, swooze, that to have but one good meale thereof he would not onely be his faithfull friend, but also stop the mouthes of all his aduersaries. Reynard smiling at his easie believe, said, If you will have seven tun, Uncle, you shall have it. These words pleased the Beare so well, and made him so pleasant, that he could not stand for laughing.

Well thought the Fox, this is good fortune, sure I will lead him where he shall laugh more measurably: and then said, Uncle, we must delay no time, and I will spare no pain for your sake, which for none of my kinne I would performe. The Beare gave him many thanks, and so away they went, the Fox promising him as much honey as he could beare, but meant as many strokes as he could undergoe: in the end they came to Lanferts house, the sight whereof made the Bear rejoyce. This Lanfert was a stout and lusty Carpenter, who the other day had brought into his yard a great Oake which (as their manner is) he began to cleave, and had struck into it two wedges; in such wise, that the clef stood a great way open: at which the Fox rejoyced much, for it was as convenient to his wish, so that with a laughing countenance he said to the Beare, Behold now deare Uncle, and be carefull of your

mischief: wherein though the wisest commonly get the victory at first, yet the just cause in the end prevailerh. In the Beares greedines to eat honey is exprest, the lascivious inconstancie of a loose and unrestrained nature, that for a minutes injoying of their own delights, quite forget the businessse and cares they have in hand. In the Fox is exprest the cunning of wisdom, which ever cast our (to loose natures) those bayres of delight, which being swallowed with greedinesse, do ever choake the swollower, as appeareth by the Beare, who is not selfe

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enely wounded, and in danger of his life, but also made a mocke and scorne to his enemies. Also by the cruelty used on the Beare by the common people, is shewed, how when an ill man is once snared in his vices, how every one of what degree soever, from the highest to the lowest, are ready to prosecute and revenge themselves for the ill they have received.



selfe, for within this tree is so much honey, that it is unmeasurable, try if you can get into it, yet good Uncle eat moderately: for albeit the combs are sweet and good, yet a surfeit is dangerous, and may be trouble some to your body, which I would not for a world, since no harme can come to you, but must be my dishonour. Begone not for me ~~Reynard~~ Reynard
(said

of Reynard the Fox.

said the Beare)no2 think mee such a foole that I cannot temper mine appetite. It is true my best Uncle, I was to beld: I pray you enter in at the end, and you shall finde your desire. The Beare with all ha2 entered the tree, with his two sate forward, & thrust his head into the cleft, quite ober the eares: which when the Fox perceibed; he instantly ranne and puld the wedges out of the tree, so that he lockt the Beare fast therein & then neither flattery no2 anger abaile the Beare, for the Pepheto had by his decelt brought the Uncle into so false a prison, that it was impossible by any Art to free himselfe of the same. Alas, what profited unto his great strengih and valour? why they were both causes of more heration: and finding himselfe destitute of all reliefe, he began to howle and bzap, and with scratching and tumbling to make such a noyse. that Lanfert amazed came hastily out of his house, habing in his hand a sharpe booke, whilst the Beare lay wallowing and roaring within the tree, which the Fox a far off seeing, he said to the Beare in scozne, Is the honey good (Uncle) which



of Reynard the Fox.

you eate? how do you? eat not too much I beseech you: pleasant things are apt to surfet, and you may hinder your journey to the Court: when Lanfert cometh (if your belly be full) he will give you drinke to digest it, and wash it downe your throat: and having thus said, he went towards his Castell. But by this time Lanfert finding the Beare fast taken in the tree: he ran to his neighbours and desired them to come into his pard, for there is a Beare fast taken there. Which being nosped thozro to all the Towne, their was neither man, nor woman, nor child, but ranne thither, some with one weapon, and some with another; as Coades, Wakes Broomstaves, or what they could gather up: the Priest had the handle of the Crosse: the Clarke, the holy-water sprinkled, and the Priest's wife, Dame Jullocke with her distaffe, for she was then spinning: nay the elde Weldaimes ranne that had nere a tooth in their heads. This army put Bruine into a great feare, being none but himsele to withstand them, and hearing the clamour of the nyse which came thundering upon him, he was led and pulled extremely, that he got cut his head, but left behinde him all the skynne, and his eares also: in so much that never creature beheld a fouler or moze deformed Beast; for the blood cowering all his face, and his hands leching the flayes and skin behind them, nothing remained but ugliness: 'twas an ill market the Beare came to, for he lost both motion and sight, feet and eyes: but notwithstanding this torment, Lanfert the Priest: and the whole Parish came upon him and so becudgell'd him about his body part, that it might well be a warning to all his misery, to know that ever the weakest shall still go most to the wall: This the Beare found by experience, for every one exercised the height of their furies upon him; even Houghlin with the crooked legge, and Ludolfe with the long broad nose, the one with a Leaden mallet, and the other with an yron whip, all to be lashed poore sir Bruine, not so much but sir Bertolfe with his long fingers, Lanfert and Ortam did him moze annoyance then all the rest, the one having a sharpe Welsh hook: the other a crooked staffe well leaded at the end, which he used to play at stab ball with.

all,

of Reynard the Fox.

all, there was Bickin, and Armes-Ablequake, Bane the Priest with his staffe, and Dame Jullocke his wife, all these so belabour'd the Bear, that his life was in great danger: the poore Bear in this Passacre sate and sigh'd exreamly, groaning under the burthen of their strokes, of which Lanferts were the greatest and thundered most dreadfully, for Dame Podge of Calport was his Mother & his Father was Marob & Staple-maker, a passing stout man when he was alone: Beuine receibed of him many showers of stones till Lanferts Woe her rushing befoze the rest with a staffe, strooke the Bear in the head such a blow, that he could neither hear nor see, so that abating from the astonishment, the Bear leapt into the Riber adjoynting, through a cluster of wilkes there standing together, of which he threth dibers into the water which was large and deep, amongst whom the Parsons wife was one; which the Parson seeing how she floated like a Seamew, he left striking the Bear: and cried to the rest of the company, help, oh help, Dame Jullocke is in the water, help both men and women, for whosoever saves her, I gibe free pardon of all there finnes and transgressions, and remit all penance imposed whatsoeuer: this heard, ebery one left the Bear to help Dame Jullocke, which as soone as the Bear saw, he cut the stream and swam a way as fast as he could, but the Priest with a great noise pursued him, crying in his rage; Turne villaine, that I may be rebenged of the, but the Bear swam in the strength of the streame and suspected not his calling, for he was proud that he was so escaped from them: onely he bitterly curst the Honey tre and the Fox, which had not onely betrayed him, but had made him lose his hood from his face, and his gleeves from his fingers: in this sozt he swam some thre miles downe the water, in which time he grew so wearp, that he went on land to get ease, where blood trickled downe his face: he groaned, sigh'd, and drew his breath so short, as if his last houre had been expiring: Now whilist these things were in doing, the Fox in his way home stole a fat Hen, and threth her into his male, and running thorow a by-path that no man might perceibe him, he came towarde the Riber with infinite joy: for he suspected

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that the Bear was certainly slaine; therefore said to himself, My fortune is as I thought it, for the greatest enemy I had in the Court is now dead, nor can any man suspect me guilty thereof, but as he spake these words, looking towards the River, he espied where Bruine the Bear lay rellied, which struck his heart with grief, & he railed against Lanfart the Carpenter, saying, Silly foole that thou art, what mad man to wold have lost such good benifiton, especially being so fat and tobole-some, and for which he took no paines, for he was taken to his hand, any man would have been proud of the fortune which thou neglectest. Thus fretting and chiding, he came to the River, where he found the Bear all wounded and bloupy of which Reynard was only guilty, yet in scozne he said to the Bear, Mon Sire, Dieu vous garde. O thou foule red villaine, said the Bear to himself, what impudence is like to this? but the Fox went on with his speech, and said, What Uncle? have you forgot any thing at Lanfarts, or have you paid him for the honey-combes you stole? if you have not it will redound much to your disgrace, which before you shall undergo, I will pay him for them my self, sure the honey was excellent good, and I know much more of the same price; Good Uncle, tell me before I goe, into what order do you mean to enter, that you wear this new fashioned Hood? will you be a Monk, an Abbot, or a Frier? surely he that shaved your croton, hath croppt your ears, also your fore-top is lost and your glabes are gone, fie stolen, go not bare-handed, they say you can sing Peccavi rarely. These taunts made Bruine mad with rage; but because he could not take revenge, he was content to let him take his pleasure: then after a small rest he plunged againe into the River, and swam down the streame, and landed on the other side, where he began with much griefe to meditate how he might get to the Court, for he had lost his ears, his talens, and all the skin off his feet, so that he had a thousand deathes followed him, he could not go, and yet of necessity he must move, that in the end compelled by extremity, he set his buttocks on the ground, and tumbled his body over and over, so by degrees tumbling now halfe a mile, and then half a mile, in
the

of Reynard the Fox.

the end he tumbled to the Court, where others beholding his strange manner of approach, they thought some prodigie had come towards them, but in the end the King knew him, and grew angry, saying, It is Sir Bruine my servant, what villains have wounded him thus, or where hath he been that he brings his death thus along with him? O my dread Sovereigne Lord the King (cried out the Beare) I complaine me grievously unto you: behold how I am massacred, which I humbly beseech you revenge on that false Reynard, who for doing your royall pleasure, hath brought me to this disgrace and slaughter. Then said the King, How durst he do this? now by my crown I swear I will take revenge which shall make the traitors tremble: whereupon the King sent for all his Counsell, and consulted, how, and in what sort to prosecute against the Fox where it was generally concluded, that he should be againe summoned to appear, and answer his trespasses; and the parties to summon him, they appointed to be Tibert the Cat, as well for his gravity as wisdom: all which pleased the King well.

C H A P. 5.

How the King sent Tibert the Cat for Reynard the Fox

Then the King called for Sir Tybert the Cat, and said to him, Sir Tybert, you shall go to Reynard, and say to him the second time, and command him to appear, and answer his offences, for though he be cruell to other beasts, yet to you he is courteous, assure him if he faile at your first summons, that I will take so severe a course against him and his posterity, that his example shall terrifie all offenders. Then said Tybert the Cat, My dread Lord, they were my foes which thus advised you, for there is nothing in me, that can force him either to come or tarry: I beseech your Majestie send some one of greater power, I am little and feeble: besides, if noble Sir Bruine, that is so strong & mighty, could not enforce him, what will my weakenesse availe? The King replied, It is your wis-

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The Morall.

By the sending of the Cat to fetch the Fox, is exprest the care of Governours, that when they have been deceived by the pride & ostentation of such as they employ, and thought discreer; that then they seek out those that are known wise and employ them, because wisdom is even circumvented by a greater wisdom, in the Cats much lothness to go, is exprest, the unwillingnes a wise man hath to meddle in dangerous matters, especially when they hold the parry with whom they have to do, of a reach far beyond them, yet when authority commands, they

dome, Sir Tibart, I imploie, and not your strength, and many preballe with Art, when violence returnes with lost labour. Well, said the Cat, since it is your pleasure, it must be accomplished, heaven make my fortune better then my heart presageth. This Tibert made things in readiness, and went towards Mallepardus, and in his journee, he saw come flying towards him one of Saint Martins Birds, to whom the Cat, cried aloud, Haile gentle bird, I beseech thee turne thy wings and flie on my right hand: but the bird turned the contrarie way; and flew on his left side, then grew the Cat very heabie for he was wise and skillfull in Augurisme and knew the signe to be ominous, neberthelesse (as many doe) he armed himself with better hope: and went to Mallepardus, where he found the Fox standing before his Castle gates, to whom Tibart said Health to my faire cousin Reynard: so it is that the King by me summons you to the Court, in which if you faile or deferre time, there is nothing more assured unto you, then a cruell and suddain death. The Fox answered, Welcome deare cousin Tibert, I obey your command, and wish my Lord the King infinite daies of happinesse, onely let me intreate you to rest with me to night, and take such cheare as my simple house affordeth, and to morrow as earlie as you will we will go towards the Court, for I have no kinsman I trust so dearely as your self. Here was with me the other day the trecherous Knight Sir Bruine the Bear, who lookt upon me with that tyrannous cruelty, that I would not for the wealth of an Empire have hazarded my person with him, but my deare cousin, with you I will goe, were a thousand sicknesses upon me. Tibert replied, You speake like a noble Gentleman, and me thinks it is best now to goe forward, for the Moon shines as bright as day. Nay deare cousin (said the Fox) let us take day before somay we encounter with our friends; the night is full of danger and suspitions. Well, said the Cat, if it be your pleasure, I am content, what shall we eat? Reynard said, trulie my store is small, the best I have is a bone can be too pleasant and sweet, what think you of it? Tibert replieth it is meat I little respect and seldome eat: I had rather have one Mouse then all the bone in

of Reynard the Fox.

in Europe. A mouse saied Reynard) toby my deare cousin here must obey dwelleth a Priest heard by, who hath a Barne by his house so though never full of mice, that I thinke halfe the Mouses in the Parish are so many dangers attend not able to beare them. O deare Reynard (quoth the Cat) doe but lead me thither, and make mee your seruant for euer: toby (said the Fox) but looe you mice so exceedingly? Beyond expression (quoth the Cat) toby a mouse is beyond Wenison of the delicatest Cats on Princes Tables: therefore conduct me thither, and command my friendship in any matter: had you slaine my father, my mother, and all my kinne, I would clea-lye forgive you.

CH A P. 7.

How Tibert the Cat was decived by Reynard the Fox.

TH E P said Reynard, Sure you do but jest. So by my life said the Cat. Well then (quoth the Fox) if you be in earnest, I will so worke that this night I will fill your belly; 'tis not possible, said the Cat: then follow me, said the Fox: for I will bring you to the place presently: thus afoote they went both all speed to the Priests Barne, which was well walled about with a mudd wall, where but the night before the Fox had broken in, and stole from the Priest an exceeding fat Hen; at which the Priest was so angrie, that he had set a grin or snare before the hole to catch him at his next coming, which the false Fox knew perfectly, and therefore said to the Cat, Sir Tibert, creep in at this hole, and beleve it you shall not tarrye a minutes space, but you shall have more mice then you are able to devour: hark, you may hear how they peepe: when your bellie is full, come againe, and I will staie and wait for you here at this hole, that so morrow we may go together to the Court: but good cousin staie not too long, for I know, my wife will hourly expect us. Then (said the Cat) think you I maye safelie enter in at this hole? these Priests are wise, and subtil, and couch the

The pleasant History



their danger of close, that rashnesse soon overtaken: Why
cousin Tibert. (said the Fox) I neker saw you turne coward
before; what man, fear you a shadow? The Cat ashamed
at his fear, sprang quickly in at the hole, but was present-
ly caught fast by the neck in the Gin, which as soon as the
Cat felt and perceived, he quickly leapt back againe: so that
the

of Reynard the Fox:

the snare running close together, he was halfe strangled, so that he began to struggle, and cry out & exclaim most piteously, Reynard stood before the hole and hard all, at which hee infinitely rejoyceth, and in great coigne said, Cousin Tybart, loke you Alice? I hope they be well fed for your sake; knowe the Priest or Martinet of your feasting, I knowe them of so good disposition, they would bring you sauce quicklie; methinks you sing at your meat, is that the Court fashion? if it bee, I would I might the Wolfe were coupled with you, that all my friends might be feasted together: but all this while the poore Cat was fast and mewed so piteously, that Martinet leapt out of bed, and cried to his people: Arise, for the thief is taken that had stolne out Bens: with these wordes the Priest unfortunately rose up and awaked all in his house, crying, the Fox is taken, the Fox is taken: and arising stark naked, he gave to Jullocke his wife an offering candle to light, and then came first to Tibert, he smote him with a great staffe, and aske him many other: so that the Cat received many deadly blowes, and the anger of Martinet was so great, that he strooke it one of the Cats eyes; which he did, to second the naked Priest, thinking at one blow to dash out the Cats braines: But the Cat perceiving his death so near him, in a desperate mode he leapt between the Priests legges, and with his clawes and teeth so fastened on his genitals, that in all the great Turkes Seralia, there was not a clearer Eunuch: which when Dame Jullocke his wife saw, she cried out and swore she had rather had lost the whole Offerings of seven years then that one poore little mouse and withall curst that ever the Gin was invented, and calling Martinet, See, my son, this thy Fathers delight and my Bechel, but it is now spoiled, to his shame and my utter losse for ever: for howsoever he be cured, yet to me he can never more be comfortable. All this while Reynard stood before the hole, and saw what passed, and laughed so excremely, that his body was ready to teare: saying to Dame Jullocke, Fie woman, do not torment your selfe so, the Priest hath lost but one stone, you may yet receive due recompence;

The Morall.

By the Fox insinuating of the Cat is expressed, how when wise men will trust their enemies, or give credit to reconciled Friends, they evermore miscarry in their designs; and therefore every wise man should so temper his affections, that he grow not fond of any thing in his enemies power; How agreeable soever it be either with his Nature or his power. For by the baits of an enemy are onely gilded pills which are faire to look on, but most bitter to taste; By the mischief which the Priest received, is shewed that they which harme watch, harme catch, and that

The pleasant History

the trap which
men now and
then set for o-
thers, brings
hurt to them-
selves.



violence : there is manie a Chappell in which but one Bell
rings. Now whilst the Fox thus scoffed the Priest's wife,
the poore Priest fell downe in a swoone : so that euerie man
left the Cat, to rebibe the Priest : which whilst they were
doing, the Fox returned home to Malepardus, for he imagi-
ned the Cat was past all hope to escape : but the poore Cat
seeing

of Reynard the Fox.

seeing all her foes buſſe about the Priest, ſhe presently began to gnaw and byte the cord, till she had sheared it quite asunder in the midst : which done, she leapt out of the hole and went roaring & tumbling (like the Beare) to the Kings Court. But before she got thither, it was faire day, and the Sunne being risen, he entered the Court, like the pittifullest beast that eber was beheld ; For by the Foxes craft his body was bearen and bzuised, his bones shivered and broken; one of his eyes lost and his skinne rent and mangled. This when the King beheld and saw Tybert, so pittifully mangled, he grew infinitely angry and took counsaile once moze, how to revenge the injuries upon the Fox. After some consultation, Grimbard the Brocke, Reynards Sisters sonne, said to the rest of the Kings counsaile, My good Lords, though my Uncle were twice so evill as these complaints make him; yet there is remedy enought against his mischiefs : therefore it is fit you doe him Justice as to a man of his ranch, which is, he must be the thirde time summoned, & then if he appeare not, make him guilty of all that is laid against him. Then the King demanded of the Brocke, whom he thought fittest to summon him, or who would be so desperate to hazard his hands, his eares, nay his life with one so tyrannous and irreligious ? Druly (answered the Brocke) if it please your Majestie, I am that desperate person, who dare adventure to carry the message to my most subtil Kinsman, if your highnesse but command mee.

CHAP. 8.

How Grimbard the Brocke was sent to bid the Fox to the Court.

Then said the King, Go Grimdart, for I command you; yet take heed of Reynard, for he is subtil and malicious. The Brocke thanked his Majestie, and so taking humble leave, went to Mallipardus, where he found Reynard & Ermelin his wife, sporting with their young whelps ; then having saluted his Uncle and his Aunt, he said : Take heed faire Uncle, that
you

The peasant History

In the sending
of the Brock
to fetch the
Fox is shewed
that when the
vicious cannot
be overtaken
& brought to
answer, then it
is meete to use
their own
weapons a-
gainst them
and with poli-
cy, which can
no way be bet-
ter done then
by imploying
their kindred,
and such as
they most
dearely affect
to perswade
them, because
Affection is e-
ver a prevail-
ling Orator.

your absence from the Court, adde not more mischief to your
cause, then the offence both deserue: beleefe, it is high time
you appear to the Court, since your delay both beget but more
danger and punishment: the complaints against you are infi-
nite, and this is your third time of Summon; Wherefore your
wisdom may tell you, that if you delay but one day further,



of Reynard the Fox.

there is not left to you oz yours any hope of mercie, for within three daies your Castle will be demourished, your kindred made slaves, and your selfe exempted for a publique example. Therefore my best Uncle, I beseech you recollect your wisedome, and goe with me presentlie to the Court. I doubt not but your discretion shall excuse you; for you have past thozow many eminent perils, and made your loss ashamed, whilst the Innocence of your cause hath bozne you spotlesse from the Tribunal, Reynard answered; Nephew, you say true and I will be advised and goe with you, not to answer offences, but in that I know, the Court stands in need of my counsell; the Kings mercie I doubt not. if I may come to speak with his Maestie, though mine offences were tenne times doubled, for I know the Court cannot stand without me, and that shall his highnes understand truelie; though I know I hate manie enemies, yet it troubles me not, for mine Innocence shall awaken their injuries, and they shall know that in high matters of State and pollicie, Reynard cannot be missing: they may well harp upon things, but the pith and ground must come from my relation: it is the envie of others hath made me leabe the Court, for though I know, their shallownes cannot disgrace me, yet may their multitudes oppresse me: Heberchele (Nephew) I will goe with you to the Court, and answer for my selfe, and not hazard the welfare of my Wife and Childzen the King to too mightie, and though he do not injurie, yet will I bear it with patience. This spoke, he turned to his wife and said, Dame Ermelin have care of my childzen, specially Reynikin my youngest Sonne for he had much of my love, and I hope will follow my steps, also Rossell is passing hopefull, and I love them intirely; therefore regard them, and if I escape doubt not but my love shall requite you, At this leabe taking Ermelin wept, and her childzen howled; for their Lord and victualer was gone, and Malepardus left unprotected.

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CHA P. 9.

how *Reynard* shrove him to *Grimbard* the Brocke.

The Myrrall

The shrift of the Fox sheweth, that when evell men are in danger, then they ever faine most religion and by a shew of penitence win pirry from those that dive not into the depth of their deccit & knavery, whereby though they be never so evill, yet they get a good name & steale opinion of the multitude. By the absolution which the Brocke gave the Fox, is shewed, how easily an honest simple man may be brought to beleve a knaves penance, & how

When *Reynard* and *Grimbard* had gone a good way on their journey *Reynard* stayed and said, Deare nephew, blame me not if my heart be full of care, for my life is in great hazard, yet to blot out my sinnes with repentance, and to cast off the burthen, gibe me leabe to shrybe my selfe unto you; I know you are holy, and habing receibed penance for my sin, my soul will be quiet. *Grimbard* had him proceed. Then said he for, Confitebor tibi Pater. Nay said the Brocke, if you will shrybe to me, doe it in English, that I may understand you: Then said *Reynard*, I have grievously offended against all the Beasts that live, and especially mine Uncle *Bruine* the Beare, whom I lately massacred, and *Tybert* the Cat whom I insnared in a grin I have trespassed against *Chauntecleare* & his Childzen, and have deboured many of them; nay the King hath not been quit of my malice, for I have flandered him and his Queene, I have betrayed *Isegrim* the Wolfe, & called him Uncle though no part of his bloud ranne in my veines I made him a Monk of *Elmane*, where I became also one of the order. I made him bind his feet to a bell-rope to teach him to ring, but the peale had like to have cost him his life, the men of the parish beat and wounded him so sore: after this I taught him to catch fish, but he was soundly beaten therfore, and feeleth the stripes at this instant. I led him to steale Bacon at a rich Priest's house, where he fed so extremely, that not being able to get out where he got in, I raised all the Toltone upon him; and then went where the Priest was sat at meat with a fat Hen before him: which Hen I snatched away, so that the Priest cried out, Kill the Fox, for never man saw thing so strange, that the Fox should come into my house, and take my meat from before me.

This is a boldnes beyond knowledge: and with these words he threat'ed his knife at mee but hee mist mee, and I ranne away whilist

of Reynard the Fox:



apt they are to
forgive tref-
passes upon
fained sorrow
which indeed
should not be
done without
a more strict
& severe exa-
mination. The
Foxes leading
the Brock by
the morastery,
and taking the
Capon, shew-
eth, that where
wickednesse is
rooted and
made as it were
a habit, that
therewith-
standing all
hypocrysie, it
will still flash
out, and a
knave will be a
knave in de-
spight of all
perswasions &
good coun-
saile.

whilst he pursued me crying. Kill the Fox, Kill the Fox, and
after him a world of people, whom I led to the place where
Isgrim was, and there I let the Henne fall, for it was too
heavie for me (yet much against my will) and then springing
thzough a hole, I got into safety. Now as the Priest took
up the Henne, he espied Isgrim, and then cried out, Strike

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friends, strike, here is the Wolfe, by no meanes let him escape us: Then the people came altogether with clubs and staves and with a dreadfull noise giving the poore Wolfe many a deadly blow, and some throwing stones after him, hit him such mortall blowes on the body, that the Wolfe fell downe as if he had bin dead, which perceibed, they took him & drag'd him by the peeles

of Reynard the Fox.

beles ober stockes and stones, and in the end dzebo him into a ditch without the billage, and there he lay all night, but how he got thence I know not. Another time I led him to a place where I told him were seven Hennes and a Cock, set on a perch all lusty and fat, and hard by the place stood a fall dooze, on which we climed: then I told him if he could craepe in at the dooze: hee should finde the Hennes. When Ilegrim with much joy went laughing to the dooze, and entring in a little, and groping about, he said Reynard, you abuse me. for here is nothing: then replied I, Uncle, they are further, and if you will have them, you must adventure for them: those which used to sit there, I my selfe had long sence; at this the Wolfe going a little further, I gave him a push forward, so that he fell down in the house, and his fall was so great, and made such a noise that they which were asleepe in the house awaked and cried, that something was fallen down at the trap dooze; whereupon they arose and lighted a candle and espyed him they beate and wounded him to death. Thus I brought the Wolfe to many hazards of his life, more then I can now either remember or reckon, which as they come to my minde: I will rebeal to you hereafter. I have also grievously offended against Dame Arsewind his wife, of which I must repent me; for it was highly to her dishonour. Uncle said Grimbart, I understand you not, you make you selfe imperfect, for you say you have offended: but declare not in what, Pardon me, Rephebo, I know you hate to heare dishonour of women, the truth is, I have layne with her, Thus have I told you my wickednesse, now order my penance as shall seeme fit in your discretion. Grimbart was both learned and wise, and therefore brake a rod from a tree, and said: Rephebo, You shall three times strike your body with this rod, and then lay it downe upon the ground, and spring three times ober it without bowing your legges or stumbling: then shall you take it up and kisse it gentlie in signe of mekenesse and obedience to your penance; which done, you are absolved of your sinnes committed to this day, for I pronounce unto you cleare remission. At this the Fox was exceeding glad, and then Grimbart said unto him; See that hence-
for b

The pleasant History

forth While you doe goodes woorks, read your Psalter, goe to Church, fast bigils, keepe holy dayes, gibe almes, and leaue your sinfull and evil life, your theft and your treason, and then no doubt you shall attaine mercy. The Fox promised to perswade all this, and so they went together towards the Court but a little besides the way as they went, stood a religious house of Nunnes, where many Geese, Hennes and Capons went without the wall: and as they went talking the Fox led Grimbart out of his right way to that place, and finding the Pullain walking without the Barne, amongst which was a fat young Capon, which strayed a little from his fellows: at which hee suddainely leapt and caught him by the feathers, which flew about his eares; but the Capon escaped: which Grimbart seeing, said, Accursed man, what will you doe, will you for a filly Pullet fall againe into all your sinnes? mischief it selfe would not doe it: to which Reynard answered, Pardon me deare Ne-
phewe, I had forgotten my selfe, but I will aske forgiveness, and mine eye shall no more wander: and then they turned oher



of Reynard the Fox:

a little Widge : but the Fox still glaunced his eye towards the Pullain, and could by no meanes refraine it, for the ill that was bred in his bones, still stuck to his flesh, and his mind carried his eyes that way as long as he could see them : which the Wicke noting, said, Fie, dissembling Couffin, why wander your eyes so after the Pullaine ? The Fox replied ; Nephew, you do me injurie so to mistake me, for mine eyes wandred not, but I was saying a Pater noster for the soules for all the Pullaine and Wike which I have laine and betrayed, in which debotton you bindred mee. Well, said Crimbarr, it may be so, but your glaunces are suspicious. Now by this time they were come into the waie againe, and made haste towards the Court, which as soone as the Fox saw, his heart quaked for feare : for he knew well the Crimes he was to answer for were infinite and painous.

CHAP. 10.

How the Fox came to the Court, and how he excused himselfe.

AS soon as it was bruted in the Court, that Reynard the Fox and Grimbart his kinsman were arrived there, every one from the highest to the lowest prepared himselfe to complain of the Fox : at which Reynards heart quaked, but his countenance kept the old garbe, and he went as proudly as ever he was wont with his Nephew through the high street, and came as gallantly into the Court, as if he had been the Kings Son, and as cleare from trespassse, as the most innocent whosoever : and when he came before the chair of State, in which the King sat, he said ; Heaven gibe your Majestie glorie and renown above all the Princes in the earth : I assure your highnesse there was never King had a truer servant then my selfe have beene to you, and yet am, and so will die : Nevertheless (my dread Lord) I know there be many in this Court that seeke my confusion, if they could winne helpe with your Majestie ; but your scoene the slaunders of malice, and although in these

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daies

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The Morall.

In the Foxes
appearing at
the Court is
shewed, that
when a male-
factor is
brought before
the Justice that
then is the fit
time for all
men that have
bin injured, to
utter their
complaints,

Dales flatterers have the most names in Princes Courts, yet
with you it is not so, nor shall they reap any thing but shame
for their labour. But the King cut him short at these words,
and said, Peace, Trayterous Reynard, I know your dissimu-
lation, and can expound your flatterie, but both shall now faile
you: thinke you I can be sought with the Staffe of your
words?

of Reynard the Fox.

words? no, it hath too oft deceived me: the peace which I commanded and swore unto, that hath you broken. And as he would have gone forward Chauntecleere crying out, O how hath I lost this noble peace? Then still Chauntecleere (said the King) and then he proceeded, thou devil among good ones, with what face canst thou say thou lovest me, and seest all those tormented creatures ready to disprove thee, whose very wounds yet spit bloody defiance upon thee: and for which, belike thy dearest life shall answer. In nomine Patris, &c. said the Fox, O my dread Lord, if Bruines could be bloody, what is that to me: if your Majesty employed him in a message, and he would neglect it to steal honey at the carpenters house, where he received his wounds, how shall I amend it? if revenge be sought, why did he not take it himself? he is strong and puissant, it was not for to be looked for at my weaknesse. As for Tybert the Cat (to whom I received with all friendship) if against my will or advice will steal into the Priests barn to catch mice and there lose his eyes, nay his life; wherein is mine offence or how become I their guardian? O my dread Lord, you may do your royal pleasure, and how else mine innocence plead, yet your will may adjudg me to what death contents you: I am your vassal, and have no support but your mercy: I knowe your strength and mine owne weaknessse, and that my death can yield you but small satisfaction, yet whatsoever your will is, that to me shall be most acceptable. And as he thus spake, Bellin the Ram step forth and his Good dame Oaway, and he sought the King to hear their complaint; with them Bruine the Beare and all his mighty linage: And Tybart the Cat, Ifgrim the Wolf, Kayward the Hare, & Pantner, the Boze, the Cammel and Bruel the Goose, the Kid and the Goat, Bauldwin the Ass, Bortel the Bul, and Hamell the Ox, the Maresell, Chauntecleere the Cocke, & Parrlet with all her wildzen. All these with one entire noise cried out against the Fox, and so mobed the King with their complaints, that the Fox was taken and arrested.

because then
only redresse
is to be had.

In the Lyon is
express the
lawful esse of
Justice, and
how terrible
is to every of-
fender, especi-
ally such as
have the guilt
of Conscience
within them.

The Foxes
bold behavi-
our shewes,
that impudent
malefactors,
when they are
called in que-
stion, make
audacity their
chiefe guard,
and by railing
against their
Adversaries,
do seek to
extenuate the
loosenesse of
their offences,
but truth and
justice will
not be hood-
winckt.

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CHAP. II.

How the Fox was rested and judged to death

Vpon this arrest a Parliament was called, and there
joyce went that Reynard should be executed: notwithstanding he answered every objection feberally, though great
Art was used both in the one and the other; to the wonderfull
admiration of all that heard him, But witnesses examined, and
every proofe made pregnant, the Fox was condemned & Judgement
was given, that he should be hanged till his body were
dead. At which sentence the Fox cast downe his head, for all
his Jollity was lost, and no flattery nor no words now noto-
b. i. d. This done Grimbart his Nephew, and others others
neere him in blood, (which could not endure to see him dye) took
their leave of the King & departed from the Court. When the
King noted what gallant young Gentlemen departed thence,
all sad and weeping, being neere of the Foxes blood and alliance,
he said to himselfe, It becometh us to take good and mature
counsaille though Reynard have some faults, yet he hath many
friends, and more vertues. As the King was thus thinking the
Cat said to the Beare: Sir Bruine and you Sir Iegrim, Why
are you slow in this Execution? the Even is almost come, and
beare be many buhes and hedges, if he escape and quit himselfe
of this danger, his subtilty is so great, that not all the Art in the
world shall never again intangle him: If you mean to execute
him, then proceede, for before the Gallowes can be made, it
will be darke night. At these words Iegrim remembzing him-
selfe, said, There is a payze of Gallowes neere at hand (and
with that feith'da deepe sigh) which the Cat noting, said: Are
you afraid sir Iegrim, or is this execution against your mind?
you may remember that it was onely his worke, that both
your brethren were hang'd: and sure had you Judgement, you
would thanke him for the same, and not thus stand trifling
time. But Iegrim halfe angry answered, Your anger puts out
the eye of your reason, yet had wee a halter that would fit his
necke

of Reynard the Fox.

necke, we would soone dispatch him, Reynard that had beene
 silent a great while, said : I beseech you shorten my paine, Sir



Tybert hath a Cord strong enough, in which himselfe was
 hanged at the Priest's house, when he bit off the Priest's geni-
 toys, besides he can climbe well and swift : O let him be mine

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The Morall.

By the violence of the Beare, the Wolfe & the Car, in persuing the Fox to death, and making themselves executioners, is shewed the great malice of great persons against their enemies, and such from whom they have received mischief, in which they will many tyme rather hazard their Honours, then their revenges to blind is wrath, and so deformed it makes men that are cloathed therewith.

The Foxes patience and wilde temper, shewes, that when men are in extremity, they must make use of all their vertues especially meeknesse.

Executioner, for it neither becometh Iseggrim nor Bruine thus to doe to their Neighbour: I am sorrye I like to see it. But since you are set to be my hangmen, please your parts and delaye not, geue before Bruine, and lead my wale: folloew Iseggrim, and beware I escape not: you sale well sale Bruine, and it is the best counsaile I have heard you geue. So forth they went, and Iseggrim and all his friends guarded the Fox, leading him by the neck, and other parts of his bodie: when the Fox felt this usage, he was dismayd, yet said: O why do you put your selves (my best kinsmen) to this paine, to do me hurt? belibe it, I could well aske you forgiveness, though my paines be pleasant unto you, yet well I know, did my Aunt your wife understand of my trouble, she would for old affection sake not see me thus tormented: But I am subject to your will and can endure your worst malice: as for Bruine and Tybert, I leave my revenge to A. sice, and wish you the reward of Traitors, if you doe not to me the worst of your powers: I know my worst fortune, and death can come but once unto me; I wish it were past already, for to me it is no terror: I saw my Father die, and how quicklie he banished, therefore the worst of death is familiar unto me. Then said Iseggrim, let us goe, for his curse shall not light on me by delaying: So he on one side, & Bruine on the other, led the poor Fox to the Gallows; Tybert running before with the halter, hoped to be revenged of his wrongs formerly received. When they were come to the place of Execution, the King and Quene, and all the rest of the Nobilitie, took their places to see the Fox die. Then Reynard full of sorow, and busily bestinking himselfe how he might escape that danger, and how to intyre and disgrace his proud enemies, and also how to dzale the King on his part, saying to himselfe, Although the King and many others be offended with me as they be he reason, for I have thoroughly described it, nevertheless yet I hope to live to be their best friend: During this meditation the Wolfe said: Sir Bruine, now remember your injuries, and take your revenge in a full measure, for the daie is come to requite you; Tybert, ascend quicklie, & bring the rope to the Gallows, making a running noose, for this daie you shall have your

will

of Reynard the Fox.

will of your enemy : and good Sir Brulne take heed he escape
not, till I my selfe raise up the Ladder. When all things
were prepared, the Fox said, How may my heart be heahte, for
Death stands now in all his hozroz before me, and I canmore-
scape ; my bread is the King, and you my Soberaign Ladie
the Queene, and you my Lords that stand to behold to see me die,
I besech you grant me this charitable Boon, that I may unlock
my heart before you, and clear my soul of her burthens, so that
hereafter no man may be blamed for me : which done, my death
will be easie, and the assistance of your prayers will raise my
soul to heaben.

for that soonest doth in-
sinuate with
mens natures
and drawes
forth pittie,
whereas
roughnesse e-
ver increaseth
mischiefe.

CHAP. 12

How Reynard made his Confession before the King.

EACH creature now took compassion on the Fox, and
said his request was small, beseeching the King to grant
it : which was done. And then the Fox thus spake : O helpe
me, Heaben : for I see no man here whom I have not offended :
yet was this ehill no Naturall inclination in me, for in my
youth I was accounted as vertuous as any breathing : this
know, I have played with the Lambes all daie long, and took
delight in their prettie beating, yet at last in my plate I bit
one, and the taste of the Blood was so sweet unto me, that I
approved the flesh, and both were so sweet, that since I can
never forbear it ; This liquorish humour dreynt me into the
woods amongst the Goates, where hearing the bleating of
the little kids, I slew one of them, and after, two more, which
slaughter made me so hardie, that then I fell to murder Hens,
Geese, and other Pullaine. And thus my crimes increased by
custome, and furie so possessed me, that all was fish which
came to my net ; After this in (the winter season) I met with
Isgrim, whereas he lay hid under a hollow tree, and he unfold-
ed unto him how he was my Uncle, and laid the Pedegree
downe so plaine, that from that day forth we became fel-
lowes and companions : which knot of friendship I may
ever curse, for then began the flood of our thefts and slaughters,
he

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hee stole the great things, & the small; hee murder'd Nobles, &
the meener Subjects : and in all our actions his share still



was eber the greatest : when hee got a Hamme, a Colfe, or
wether, his fury would hardly allow'd mee the homes to pick
on : nay when hee had an Ox, or a Cow, also himselfe, he
was

of Reynard the Fox.

toke and his seven children were serued, nothing remained to me but the bare bones to pick on. This I speak not in that I wanted (for it is well known I have more plate, Jewels and coine, then twenty Cartes are able to carry) but onely to shew his ingratitude. When the King heard him speak of this infinite treasure and riches, his heart grew inflamed with a desire thereof, and he said Reynard, where is that treasure you speak of? The Fox answered, My Lord, I shall willingly tell you, for it is true, the wealth was stolne, and had it not been stolne in that manner which it was, it had cost your Highness your life (which heauen I beseech keep ever in their protection.) When the Quene heard that dangerous speech, she started, and said, What dangers are those you speak of, Reynard? I doe command you upon your soules health, to unfold these doubtfull speeches, and to keep nothing concealed which concernes the life of my great Lord. The Fox with a sorrowfull and sad countenance replied to the Quen, O my dread Soberaigne Lady, at what infinite cost were I, if I might die at this present? but gracious Madame, your consideration and the health of mine own soul so prevaileth with me, that I will discharge my conscience, and yet speak nothing but what I will make good with the hazard of my damnation. As true, the King should have been pitteously murdered by his own people, and I must confesse by those of my dearest kindred, whom I am unwilling to accuse, did not the health of mine own soul and my fealtie to the King command the contrary: The King much perplexed at this discomber, said: Is this true Reynard which you protest? The Fox answered, Alas, my dread Lord, you see the case wherein I stand, and how small a stand is left in my poor glass to runne: Can your Majestie imagine I will now dissemble? what can the whole world availe me, when my soule perisheth? and at that he trembled and lookt so pittefully, that the Quene had great compassion of him, and humbly besought the King for the safety of his own Royall person, to take some pity of the Fox, and to command all his subjects to hold their peace, and keep silence till he had used the uttermost of his knowledge:

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By the Foxes
Confession and
accusation of
his enemies
is expressed a
three-fold
subtily in the
fox. first, by
his voluntary
confession of
his faults, is
shewed his
sorrow for the
same, and the
little hope he
had of life,
which pier-
cing into the
weak nature
of the Queene
being a wo-
man, and sub-
ject to pity,
begot much
compassion
towards him.
2. The accu-
sing of those
whom he was
known most
affuredly to
love, was a
meanes to
draw beliefe
to that hee
spoke
3. The inga-
ging the life
of the King,
and making
the treason so
soule, was a
way to af-
fright the

all which was presently done, and the Fox proceeded in this manner: Since it is the pleasure of my sovereign Lord the King, and that his royal life lieth in the ballance with my present death, I will freely and boldly unfold this capital and fault treason, and in the relation not spare any guiltie person for any respect whatsoever, whether it be blood, greatness, or authority: Know then, my dread sovereign Lord the King, that my father by a strange accident, digging in the ground, found our King Emericks treasure, being a masse infinite and innumerable, of which being possesse, he grew so proud and haughty: that he held in scorn all the Beasts of the Wilderne, which before had been kinsmen and companions; at last he caused Tybert the Cat to goe into the fast Forrest of Arden, to Bruine the Bear, and to tender to him his homage and fealty, saying, If it would please him to be King, he should come into Flaunders, where he would shew him means how to set the Crown upon his head. Bruine was glad of this Embassage (for he was ever ing ambitious, and had long thirsted for sovereignty) and thereupon came into Flaunders to where my Father receibed him nobly. When presently he sent for his two kinsmen Grimbart my Nephew and for Hegerim the Wolfe, and for Tybert the Cat: then these five continuing betwixt Gaunt and the village called Elfe, they held a solemn Conference for the space of a whole night: in which by the assistance of the Devil and the strong confidence of my fathers riches it was there concluded, that four of them should be forthwith murdered: which to effect they took a solemn oath in this manner: The Bear, my father Grimbart and the Cat, laying their hands on Hegerims Crown, swore first to make Bruine their King & to place him in the chair of State at Acon, and to set the Imperial Diadem on his head: and if by any of your majesties blood and alliance, they should be againe saved, that then my father with his treasure should hire those which should utterly chase and root them out of the Forrest. Now after this determination held and finished, it happened that my Nephew Grimbart being one a time high ston with wine, he discovered this damnable plot to dame Slope-

oade

of Reynard the Fox.

cade his wife, commanded her upon her life to keep secret the
 same: but she forgetfull of her charge, disclosed it in confession
 to my wife, as they went a pilgrimage ober an Heale, with
 like conjuration of secrecie: but she (woman like) contained
 it no longer then till she met with me, & gave me a full know-
 ledge of all that passed, yet so as by all means I must
 keep it secret too, for she had sworn by the three Kings of Cul-
 len neber to disclose it: and withal, she gave me such assurance
 by certain tokens, that I right well found all was true which
 she had spoken in so much, that she very affrighted me & made
 my haire stand upright, and my heart became like Lead, cold
 and heaue in my bosome, which made me call to mind the sto-
 rie of the Frogs, who being free without subjection com-
 plained to Jupiter, & desired they might haue a King to rule
 and govern ober them, and he presently sent them a Snake,
 which eat and deuoured them up: so that by his tyrannie they
 became the most miserable of all creatures: then they com-
 plained againe to Jupiter for redresse, but it was then too late
 for they hat could not be content with their freedome, must
 now of necessitie suffer in thraldome.

Thus I feared it might happen to us, and thus I for-
 rored for your maiestie, al though you little respect my grie-
 uing: I know that ambition of the Beare, and his tyrannie
 is so infinite great, that should the gouernment come into his
 hands (as heauen forbid) the whole Common-wealth will be
 destroyed: Besides, I know your maiestie of so royall and
 princely birth so mightie, so gracious, and so mercifull, that
 it had bene a damnable exchange to haue seene a ravenous
 Beare sit in the throne of a royall Lyon, for there is in the
 Beare and in his generation more prodigall loosenesse & in-
 confidence, then in any Beast whatsoeuer. But to procede,
 from this sorrow, I began to meditate how I might undo my
 Fathers false and wicked conspiracies, who sought to bring a
 base Traitor and a slave into the throne Emperiall: for I well
 perceived as long as he held the Treasure, there was a pos-
 sibility of deposing your Maiestie, & this troubled my thought
 exceedingly, so that I laboured how I might find out where

Queene, and
 others of he
 renderesse o
 heart, and to
 bring his ene-
 mies into
 disgrace and
 scandall,
 wherein the
 Fox sheweth,
 that he which
 will slander, or
 will haue any
 untruth belie-
 ved: must first
 strengthen his
 opinion with
 pittie, then get
 beliefe, and
 lastly exercise
 his mischiefes,
 against all
 which, a wise
 man will shut
 his ears as the
 Lyon did: If
 he be not o-
 ver reuenced
 by those he
 loves as the
 Lyon was by
 the Queene,
 and his owne
 couerousnesse
 in desiring
 that infinite
 treasure, then
 which there
 is nothing
 draws a man
 soouer to the
 beliefe of un-

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truth and of
fairhood : for
what aman
desires, that
his o-ue de-
fire will make
him credit, and
where such
credit is given
there com-
monly the-
wicked escape
from punish-
ment, as here
is fell out with
the Fox.

my Fathers Treasure was hid, and so that end I watcht and
attended night and day in the woods, in the bushes, and in



the open fields : nay, in all places where so ever my father laid
his eyes, there was I ever watching and attending. At last it
happened on a time as I was laid downe flat on the ground, I
saw

of Reynard the Fox.

that my father came running out of a hole, and as soon as he
was come out, he gazed round about him, to see if any disco-
vered him: then seeing the coast cleare, he stopped the hole
with sand, and made it so even, smooth and plaine, that no
curious eye could discern a difference betwixt it and the other
earth: and where the print of his foot remained, that with his
talle he stroked over, and with his mouth so smoothed that no-
man might perceiue it: and indeed that and many other sub-
tilties, I learned of him there at that instant: when he had thus
finished, straight he went towards the village about his private
affaires: then went I presently towards the hole, and not-
withstanding all his subtiltie, I quickly found it out, then en-
tered I the Cave, where I found but innumerable quantities
of treasure, which cannot be expressed: which found, I took
E. me. in my wife to helpe me, and we ceased not day nor night
with infinite great toyle and labour, to carrie and convey away
this treasure to another place much more convenient for us,
where we laid it safe from the search of any creature. Now
during the time that my wife and I were thus imployed, my
father was in consultation with the rest of the traitors, about
the death of the King: in which consultation it was conclu-
ded, that Isegrim the Wolfe should trauaile over all the King-
dome, and promise to all Barons that would take wages, and
acknowledge Bruine for their soveraigne and defend his ti-
tle, a full yeares paye before hand. And in this journey my Fa-
ther accompanied him carrying letters Parents signed to that
purpose, little suspecting that he was rob'd of the treasure which
should supplie his treason: When this negotiation was fini-
shed betwixt Elve and Soame, and a world of balliant soldier-
ers raised against the beginning of the next spring: then they
returned to Bruine and his counsaile, to whom they declared
the many perills they had escaped in the Dukedome of Saxony
where they were pursued by Huntsmen and Hounds, so as
they hardly escaped with life: after this relation they shew-
ed Bruine their muster-rolls, which pleased him exceeding
much, for there was of Isegrims lineage about twelve hun-
dred souldiers to the actions, besides the Barons whom he intended

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the Foxes, the Cats, and the Dassens, all which would be in readinesse upon an hours warning. All this I found out (I praise Heaven) by perfect intelligence: now things being brought to this perfection, my father went to his Cate of treasure: but when he found it open, spoild and ransackt, it is not in me to expresse the infinite agony and sorrow he fell into, that grief conberiting to madnesse, and madnesse to desperation: suddainly he went to the next tree and hang'd himselfe.

Thus by my Art onely was the Treason of Bruine defeated, for which I now suffer: from hence sprang all misfortune, as thus: These foule traitors Bruine and Hegim, being of the Kings privatest Counsell, and sitting in high and great Authority, tread upon me poore Reynard and worke my disgrace: notwithstanding for your Majesties sake, I have lost my naturall Father. O my dread Lord, what is he, or who can tender you a better affection, thus to lose himselfe to save you? The King and Queene having great hope to get this inestimable treasure from Reynard, tooke him from the Gibbet, and intreated him to unfold where this great treasure was. But the Fox replied, O my Lord, shall I make mine enemies my hairens? Shall these Traitors which take away my life, and would devour yours, be possesse of the good I enjoy? No, that's a madnesse, I will never die guilty of. Then said the Queene, fear not Reynard, the King shall save your life and grant you pardon, and you shall henceforth sweare Faith and true Allegiance to his Majestie. The Fox answered: Dearest Madam, if the King out of his Royall nature will give credit to my truth, and forgive my former offences; there was never King so rich as I will make him. Then the King sitting the Queene, said: Madam, will you believe the Fox? know you not that it is his naturall quality to lie, steal and deceive? The Queene answered, My deare Lord, now you may boldly believe him, for whosoever in his prosperity he was full of errors, yet now you may see he is changed: he spareth not to accuse his one father, nay Grimbart his dearest Nephew and kinsman, had he dissembled, he might have

of Reynard the Fox.

he had laid his imputations on other Beasts, and not on these he loveth most intirely. ~~Tell~~ Madam (said the King) you shall at this time rule me, and all the offences of the Fox I will clearly pardon: yet with this Protestation, That if ever againe he offend in the smallest crime whatsoever, that not onely himselfe, but his whole generation I will utterly roote out of my Dominions. The Fox looked sadly when the King spake thus (but was inwardly most infinitely glad at his heart) and said, My dread Lord, it were a huge shame in me, should I speak any untruthes in this great presence. Then the King taking a grate from the ground, pardoned the Fox of all his trespasses which either he or his Father had ever committed: If the Fox now began to smile, it was no wonder, the sweetnesse of life required it. yet he fell down before the King and Queen, and humbly thanked them for mercie, protesting that for that favour he would make them the richest Princes in the world. And at these words the Fox took up a grate, and profered it unto the King, and said to him my dread Lord, I beseech your Majestie to receive this pledge as a surrender unto your Majestie of all the Treasure that the great King Ermerick was master of, with which I freely infeoffe you, out of my mere voluntary and free mutation. At these words the King received the grate, and smiling, gave the Fox great thanks for the same. But the Fox laughed out right to thinke of the abuse. from that day forward no mans Counsel prevailed with the King as the Foxes. Which the Fox saying, said to the King: My gracious Lord you shall understand, that at the West-Ende of Flanders there standeth a Wood called Harelloe, nere which runneth a River named Cerkempit, this is a wilderness so fast and unpassable, that hardly in all the yeare there cometh either man or woman in the same. In it I have hid this Treasure, whither I would have your Majestie and the Queene to goe, for I know none but your selves to whom I dare trust in so great designe, and when your highnesse comes thither, you shall find two Birchin trees growing by the pit, into which you shall enter, and there you shall find the Treasure,

which.

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which consisteth of the Coine, rich Jewels, and the wealthy Crown which King Ermerick wore. Which which Crown Bruine the Bear should have been Crowned, if his treason had succeeded according to his determination: there shall you see also many rich and costly precious stones, of which when you are possesse, then remember the love of your servant Reynard. The King answered, Sir Reynard, you must your selfe help me to digge for this Treasure, for else I shall never finde it. I have heard named Paris, London, Acon, and Cullen, but Cerkenpit I never heard of, therefore I feare you dissemble. The Fox blushed at these words, yet with a bold countenance he said: is your Majesty so doubtfull of my faith? nay then I will appeare my wordes by publique testimony: and to this he called forth Kyward the hare, from amongst the rest of the Beasts, and commanded him to come before the King, charging him upon his Faith and Allegiance which he bore to the King and Queen, to answer truly to such questions as he should aske him. The Hare answered, I will speak truth in all things, though I were sure to die for the same. Then the Fox said: know you not where Cerkenpit standeth? Yes said the Hare, I have known it any time this dozen years, it standeth in a wood called Hustenloe, upon a hant and wide wilderness, where I have endured much torment both of hunger and cold: Besides, it was there where Father Simony the Fryer made false Coine, to which he supported himselfe and his fellows. Per that was before I and King the Hound became companions. Well. said the Fox, you have spoke sufficiently: go to your place againe: so away went the Hare. Then said the Fox, my soveraigne Lord the King, what say you now to my relation, am I worthy your esteeme or no? the King said, Yes Reynard, and I beseech thee excuse my Jealousies, it was my ignorance which did thee chide: therefore forthwith make preparation that we may go to the pit where the Treasure lieth. The Fox answered, Alas my Lord, do you imagine that I would faigne go with you: If it were so that I might go without your dishonour, which I cannot do; For you shall under-stand

fo Reynard the Fox.

stand, (though it be my disgrace) that when Isegrim the Wolfe in the Debits name, would needs grow religious and turne a Monk: that then the permission of meat which was for six Monks, was too little for him alone. Whereupon he complained so pittifullie unto me, that I commiserating his case (being my kinsman) gave him counsaile to run awaie, which he did: Whereupon I stand accursed, and excommunicated under the Popes sentence: and am determined to morrow as soone as the Sunne ariseth, to take my waie towards Rome to be absolved, and from Rome I intend to crosse the Seas to the Holp land, and will never return againe to my native Countrie, till I have done so much good, and satisfied for my sins, that I may with honour and reputation attend on your Highnesse person. The King hearing this, said: Since you stand accursed in the censures of the Church, I may not have you about me, and therefore I will at this time take Kyward the Hare, and some other with me to Crekenpit: and onlie command you Reynard, as you respect my favour, to clear your selfe of his holiness curse. My Lord (said the Fox) it is the onlie reason of my going to Rome, neither will I rest night nor daie, till I have gotten a full absolution: the course you take is good (said the King) go on and prosper in your intent and purpose.

CHAP. 13.

How Reynard the Fox was honoured of all Beasts by the Kings Commandment

As soone as this conference was ended, the royall King mounted upon an high Throne made in manner of a scaffold, made of faire squared Stone, and then commanded a generall silence amongst all his Subjects, and that evertie one should take his place according to his Birth, or dignitie in Office, onely the Fox was placed between the King and the Queene. Then said the King: Hears all you Noblemen, Knights, Gentlemen, and others of inferiour qualitie: This Reynard one of the chiefe and supream Officers of my household,

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howe so, whose offences had brought him to the least reckoning of his life, as being in the hands of the Law and Justice:



both this date in requitall of those Injuries, done that Noble
and worthy service to the State, that both my selfe and my
Audience, stand bound to render him our best graces and labours.
There,

of Reynard the Fox.

Therefore know, that for divers things best known unto The Morall.
 our selves, we have freely given pardon to all his offences,
 and restored back to him whatsoever to us was confiscated: By this ho-
 therefore henceforth I command all of you, upon the paine your done to
 and hazard of your dearest lives, that you faile not from this the Fox, you
 day forward to doe all reverence and honour not onely to may see, that
 Reynard himselfe, but also to his Wife and Childzen: when when policy
 soever or wheresoever you shall meet them, whether by night and wisdom
 or by day: not that any one hereafter be so audacious, as to get the upper
 trouble mine eares with any more complaints of him: for his hand of their
 wickednesse he hath cast behind him, and will no more be enemies, it ne-
 guilty of wrong doing: which to effect the better, to more ver resteth till
 run very earlie he taketh his journey towards Rome, where it maketh
 from the Pope he will purchase a free Pardon and Indulgence known to the
 for all his offences, and then on Pilgrimage to the Holy-land world the
 His speech when Tisellin the Raven heard, he flew to Bru- greatnesse of
 ine, Isegrim and Tibert, and said: Wretched creatures how their Con-
 are your fortunes changed? or how can you endure to bear quest, both to
 these tidings? why Reynard is now a Courtier, a Coun- expresse their
 sellour, nay the prime Favourite: his offences are forgiven, and ambition, as
 you are all betrayed, and sold unto bondage. Isegrim answer also to exte-
 ed, It is impossible Tisellin, nor can such a thing be suffered: nuate their
 do not deceive your selves (said the Raven) for it is true crimes, and
 as that now I speak it. Then went the Wolfe and the keep their foes
 Beare to the King: but the Cat staid and was so sore af- in aw with the
 frighted with the nettes, that to purchase the Foxes friend- goodly shews
 ship again, she would not onely have forgiven the evils re- of new grace
 ceived, but willingly have run into a second hazard. Bu- and favour.
 now Isegrim with great Majestie and pride tracing over the By the com-
 Fields, came before the King and Queens, and with most plaint of the
 bitter and cruell words, entred against the Fox in such a Raven, is shew-
 passionate and impudent manner, that the King being infi- ed the jealou-
 nely moved with displeasure, caused the Wolfe and the sie and fear of
 Beare to be presently arrested upon high Treason: which the weaker
 suddenly was done with all violence and fury, and they were fort, and how
 bound hand and foot so fast, that they could neither stir nor move in their trou-
 from the place where they were caught. Now when the Fox bles they flie
 to the Heads
 of faction, and
 stir them
 (with their
 own safeties)
 to prevent e-
 vils.
 had

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By the Wolfe had thus intyralled and intangled them, he so laboured with
and the Beares the Quene, that he got leabe to haue so much of the Beares
commitment, is shewed, that obliue, as would make him a large Scrip for his Journey:
when men
complain in
unseasonable
times, they
ever runne
themselves in-
to most appa-
rant and and
grievous mis-
chiefes.



which granted: he wanted nothing but a strong paire of
shoes to defend his feet from the stones in his traile:
where-

of Reynard the Fox.

Whereupon he said to the Quene, Madam, I am your Pilgrim, and if it would please your Majestie but to take it into your consideration, you shall find that Sir Isgrim hath a pair of excellent long lasting ones, which would you boughsafe to bestow upon me, I would pray for your Majesties leul in all my travaille, above my charitable devotion. Also mine Aunt dame Arsewind, hath other two shoes, which would your Majestie bestow upon me, I should be most infinitely bound to you, noz should you doe to her any wrong, because she goes seldome abroad. The Quene replied, Reynard, I cannot percebe how you can want such shoes, for your journey is full of labour and difficultie, both in respect of the stony mountaines and the gravelly waies, and therefore you shall have (though it touch their life never so nearly) from each of them a pair of Shoes to accomplish and finish your journe.

CHAP. 14.

How *Isgrim* and his wife *Arseswind* had their shoes pluckt off, for *Reynard* to wear to *Rome*.

After the Fox had made this petition, Isgrim was taken and his shoes pulled off in most cruell and violent manner, so that all the beines and sinewes lay naked, nozdurst the poore massacred Wolfe either complain oz resist. After he had been thus tormented, then dame Arsewind his wife was used on the same manner on her hinder feet, as her husband was on his forefeet: which the Fox seeing, said to to her in a scornfull manner: Deare Aunt, how much am I bound to you that takes all this paines for my sake? questionlesse you shall be a sharer in my Pilgrimage, and take part in the pardon I shall bring from beyond the Seas by the helpe of your Shoes. Then Arsewind (though speech were trouble some to her) said, Well Sir Reynard you have your will accomplisht, yet heaven (I hope) will requite the misdoer. This she said, but her husband and the Beare late mute, for their wounds were grievous unto them: and surely had the Cat been there also,

The pleasant History

The Moral.

In the spoyling the Beare of her skinne, and the Wolf of his shooes, is shewed, both the malice of a revengeful enemy, that never thinks his Foe weakned enough, till he be utterly ruined, as also the indiscretion of an over-angry nature that cannot stay to give his wrōgs advantage, but utters his spleen before he can either get beliefe or remedy. By the ceremonies done to the Fox, & the curiosity of the Ram, is shewed, that in cases of indifferency, (where authority hath power to command) for any man to stand upon nice and puritanical terms with his superiors, doth not onely breed

also he had not escap't some extreams punishment. The next morning very early, Reynard causing his shooes to be well oyled, put them on, and made them as fit to his feet, as they were to the Wolfes, and then went to the King and Quene, and said, My dread Lord and Lady, your poore subject boweth before your Majesties, humbly beseeching your Highnesses, to vouchsafe to deliver me my male and my staffe blest, according to the custome due unto Pilgrims.

This said, the King sent for Bellin the Hamme, and commanded him to take solemne Oaffe before the Fox, and to deliver him his staffe and his male: but the Ham refused, saying, My Lord, I dare not, for he hath confessed he is in the Popes curse: and the King said, what of that, have not our Doctors told us, that if a man commit all the sinnes in the world, yet if he repent himselfe, be shaven, do penance, and make as the Priest shall instruct him, that all is clearly forgiven him? and hath not Reynard done all this? then answered Bellin, Sir, I am loath to meddle herein, yet if your Majestie will bear me harmless against the Bishop of Prendelore (my ordinary) and against the Arch-deacon of Looswind, and Rapiamus his Official, I will effect your commandment. At this the King grew angry, and said, I scorne to be behold- ing unto you: but when the Hamme saw the King offended, he shooke for feare, and ranne presently to the Altar; and sung Oaffe, and used many ceremonies over the Fox, who gave little respect unto them, more then the desire he had to enjoy the honour. After when Bellin the Ham had finished his Orisons, he presently hung about Reynards neck his male: which was made of the Beares skinne, and put into his right foot a Palmers staffe: and thus being furnished of all things, he leaped sadly upon the King, as if he had been loath to depart and fained to weep (though sorrow and he were never farther asunder) onely his worst griefe was, that all in that presence were not in the same case that the Bear and the Wolf were: yet he took his leave of them, and desired every one to pray for him, as he would pray for them: and then offering to depart (for knowing his own knavery, he was very desirous to be gone)

fo Reynard the Fox.

gone.) The King said, Sir Reynard, I am sorry we must part thus suddenly: then said the Fox, There is no remedy my Lord, nor ought I be slow in so debout an action. Then the King took leaue, and commanded all that were about him (but the Bear and the Wolfe) to attend Reynard some part of his journey. One that had seen how gallant and personable Reynard was, and how well his staffe and his male became him: as also how fit his shoes were for his feet, it could not haue chosen but haue stirred in him very much laughter: yet the Fox carried himselfe outwardly very demurely, howe euer inwardly he smiled at the abuses he had cast amongst them, especially to see his enemies, now his attendants, and the King, whom he had most palpably tongued with false lies, to be aiding to all his baine desires, did accompany him also as if had been his companion. But the Fox being now onward his way, he said to the King, I beseech your Majesty trouble your selfe no further, but in respect of your ease, and the danger that might happen to your royal person, for you haue arrested two capitall Traitors, who if in your absence they should get at liberty, the danger were infinite, which might insue thereon. And this said, he stood upon his hinder feet, and entreated the beasts that were in his company, and would be partakers of his pardon, that they should pray for him: which done, he departed from the King with an erecting sad and heauie countenance: When turning to Kyward the Mare, and Belling the Hare, he said with a smiling countenance: my best friends, shall we part thus soon? I know your leaues will not leaue me yet: with you then I was neuer offended, and your conuersations are agreeable to my nature: for you are mild, loving and courteous, religious, and full of wise counsaile, euen such as my selfe was when I was first a Recluse: if you haue a few green leaues, or a little grasse, you are well content, as with all the bread and flesh in the world, and you are temperate and modest: and thus with a world of such like flattering words he inticed these two, that they were content to go along with him.

reprehension
but punish-
ment.

By the Foxes
Hypocrasie, is
seen the dis-
simulation of
worldly men,
and how to ef-
fect their mis-
chiefe to the
full hight,
they ever put
on a most false
cloak of Re-
ligion.

By the gene-
rall atten-
dance of all
the Beasts on
the Fox, is
shewed, the
flattery and
basenesse of
many people
that never
look how
good a man is,
but how
great, and that
favour and
countenance,
is ever enough
to command
at their servi-
ces.

CHAP.

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CHAP. 15.

How *Kyward* the Haire was slaine by *Reynard* the Fox,
and sent by the Ram to the King.

THUS marched these thre together, and when Reynard
was come to the gates of his own house, he said to Bellin
cousin, I will intreate you to stae here without a little,
till I and Kyward goe in: for I would have him a witness
of some private passages betwixt me and my wife, Bellin was
well content, and so the Fox and the Ware went into Malepar-
dus, where they found dame Ermelin lying on the ground with
her younglings about her, who had sorrowed exceedingly for
the losse and danger of her husband: but when she saw his re-
turne, her joy was ten times doubled: But beholding his
maile, his staffe, and his shoes, she grew into great admirati-
on, and said, Dear husband, how have you fared? to whom
he delibered from point to point, all that had passed with him
at the Kings Court, as well his danger as release, and that
now he was to goe a pilgrimage, having left Bruine and Ise-
grim to pledges for him till his returne: as for Kyward, he
said, the King had bestowed him upon them, to do with him
what they pleased, affirming, that Kyward was the first that
had complained of him, for which questionlesse he vowed to
be sharplie revenged. When Kyward heard these wordes, he
was much apaled, and would faine have fled awaie, but he
could not: for the Fox had got between him and the Gate,
who presently ceazed the Ware by the neck: at which the Ware
cried unto Bellin for help, but could not be heard, for the Fox
in a trice had torn out his throat: which done, he, his wife
and young ones feasted therewith merrily, eating the flesh,
and drincking the blood to the Kings health: but Ermelin grow-
ing suspicious, said, I feare, Reynard, you mock me: as you
love me, tell me how you sped at Court. Then he told her
how extreemly he had flattered the King and the Queen, and
abused them with a fained promise of treasure that was not,
in so much, that he knew when it should come to be revealed,
the

of Reynard the Fox.

the King would take all the meates he could to destroy him.
And therefore ~~Wille~~ said he, there is no remedie but we must
steale from hence, into some other Forrest where we may



the in better safety, an in a place more fruitfull, where we
shall have all the delicate meates that can be sought for clere
springs.

The Moral.

By the killing
of the Hare, is
shewed that
whereas men
out of the
lightheffe and
easynesse of
their beliefe,
do give credit
to the entice-
ments of their
Adversaries or
newreconciled
Friends, that
evermore some
inevitable mis-
chief doth stil
follow such
folly and im-
providence.
Also how easi-
ly a malicious
man can finde
cause of qua-
rell with such
as are too
weak for them
or as eye-fores
stand between
them and the
end of their
purposes, or
are able to re-
veale and hin-
der their pro-
jects.

By the Rams
carrying the
Hares head to
the Lyon, and
taking upon
him to indite
the Letters.

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which he saw
not, is discove-
red, that ever
such vain glo-
rious pickpur-
ses of other
qualities, doe
ever carry
their owne
shames & dis-
reputations,
and when
they looke for
moſt honour
or renowne,
they reap no-
thing but mi-
ſery, ſeorne
and disgrace.

ſpringe, freſh ribbes, coole ſhades, and ſooleſome ayre : heere
I knowe is no a biding : and nowe I have gotten my thumb
out of the Kings mouth, I will no more come within the dan-
ger of his talons. Yet (ſaid Ermelin) I have no fancy to
go from hence, to a place where I am utterly unacquainted :
here we poſſeſſe all that we deſire, and you are a Lord over
all that lives about you, and it is but an indiſcreet hazard to
change a certaine good for a hoped contentment : beſides, we
are here ſafe enough, and ſhould the King beſiege us never
ſo ſtraightly, yet have we ſo many paſſages and by-holes
that hee can neither cut from us reliefe or libertie. What
reaſon have we then to ſtie beyond Seas? but you have ſtoozne
it, that's my vexation. Nay Dame (ſaid the Fox) grieve
not at that : the more ſtoozne, the leſſe ſtoozne : Beſides
I have heard ſome ſaie, that a ſtoz't Dath is no Dath, nor do
I make account that this Pilgrimage will not aballe me a ruff,
And therefore I am reſolved, and will not ſtart from hence,
but followe thy counſaile : If the King doe hunt after mee, I
will guard my ſelfe as well as I am able, and againſt his
power applie my policie : ſo that being forced to open my
ſacke, let him not blame mee if hee catch hurt by his owne
furle.

All this while ſtood Bellin the Kammie at the Gate, and
grewe exceeding angrie both againſt the Fox and the Hare, that
they made him waite ſo long : and therefore called out a-
loud, for Reynard to come ſtraie : Which when Reynard
heard, he went forth and ſaid ſoſelie to the Kame Good Bellin
he was offended : Kyward is in earnest conference with his
deareſt Aunt, and entreated me to ſaie unto you, that if you
would be pleaſe to walke befoze hee would ſpeedilie ſhortake
you, for he is light of foot and ſpeedier then you. nor will his
Aunt part with him thus ſuddenlie, for he and her Childzen
are much perplext at my departure. I but (quoth Bellin) me
thought I heard Kyward cry for helpe. Now, cry for helpe?
can you imagine he ſhall receiue hurt in my houſe? farre be
ſuch a thought from you : but I will tell you the reaſon : Af-
ſoone as we were come into my houſe, and that Ermelin my
Wife

of Reynard the Fox.

Wife understood of my Pilgrimage, presently she fell downe
in a swoone: which when Kyward saw, he cryed aloude O
Bellin come and helpe my Hunt, she dyed, she dyed: then said the
Kam, In sadnesse I mistooke the crye, and thought the Ware had
bene in danger. It was your too much care of him, said the
Fox, but before he should have any injurie in my house. I
would leave to respect either Wife or Childzen. But letting
this discourse passe, you remember Bellin, that yesterday the
King and his Counsaile commanded me, that before I depar-
ted from the Land, I should send unto him two Letters, which
I have made readie, and will intreat you my dearest Cousin to
beare them to his Majestie. The Kam answered, I would wil-
lingly doe you the service, if there be nothing but honour able
matter contained in your Letters: but I am unprovident of any
thing to carrie them in. The Fox said, that is provided for
you already, for you shall have my male which you may con-
venientlie hang about your necke: I know they will be thank-
fully received of his Majestie, for they containe matter of great
importance. When Bellin promised to carry them: So the Fox
returned into the house, and tooke the male, and put therein
the head of Kyward, and brought it to the Kam, and gave him
a great charge not to looke therein, till it was presented to the
King, as he did expect the Kings favour: and that he might
further indeare himselfe with his Majestie, he had the Kam
take upon him the indiring of the Letters, which will be so
pleasing to the King, that questionles he will power upon you
many favours.

The Kamme was exceeding glad of his advice, and thank-
ed the Fox, saying: What the favours hee did him should not
be requited; and I know it will be much to mine honour
when the King shall thinke I am able to indite with so great
perfection: for I know there be many in these daies as ig-
norant as my selfe, that are risen to high promotion, onely by
taking upon them the worth of other mens Labours: And
therefore why may not I runne the same course also? Yes I
praise you Reynard further advise me: As it meete that I take
Kyward the Ware along with me: O by no means (said the
Fox)

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For let him come after you, for I know his Hunt will not
yet part with him. Besides, I have other secret things to shew
part to him, which may not yet be revealed. This said, Bellin
took leave of the Fox and went toward the Court, in which
Journey he made such speed, that he came thither before noon,
where he found the King, in his Palace sitting among the
Nobility.



fo Reynard the Fox.

The King wondered when he saw the Rammie come in with the male which was made of the Bears skinne, and said: Whence comest thou Bellin, and where is the Fox, that you have that about you? Bellin answered: My dread Lord, I attend the noble Fox to his house, where after some repose, he desired me to bear certain Letters to your Majesty of infinite great importance, to which I easily consented. Whereupon he delivered me the Letters inclosed in this male, which Letters my selfe had formerly indited, and I doubt not but are such as will give your High esse both contentment and satisfaction. Presently he commanded the Letters to be delivered to Rocart his Secretary, who was an excellent Linguist, and understanding all Languages: that he might read them publicly, so he and Tybart the Cat took the male from Bellins neck, and opening the same, instead of Letters they drew out the Head of Kyward the Hare: at which being amazed they said: What and alas, what Letters call you these? Well he it, my dread Lord, here is nothing but the head of poore murdered Kyward. Which the King seeing (he said) Was how unfortunate was I to believe the traitorous Fox? And with that being oppressed with anger, griefe and shame: he held downe his head for a good space, and so did the Queen also: but in the end shaking of his curled locks, he groaned out such a dreadfull noise, that all the beasts of the Forrest did tremble to here. Then spake Sir Firapell the Libard, who was the Kings nearest kinsman, and said: Why is your Majesty thus vexed in heart? this sorrow might serve for the Quenes Funerall, I doe beseech you aswage your anguish: are not you King and master of this Countrey, and are not all things subject to your power? The King replied, Cousin, this is a mischefe beyond endurance, I am betrayed by a base villaine, and traitor, and have been made to wrong and abuse my best friends and subjects, even those of my blood, and nearest counsel, I mean the stout Braine, and balliant Hegrim, whose wrongs speak loud to my dishonour, yet in my selfe I found an unwillingness thereto, only my Quenes pittie working upon the ea-

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Queste of my belief, hath made me guilty of that which will
 evermore grieve me. Why (said the Lybard) what of all this?
 You are shewe all your turries, and with one smile can salve the
 greatest wound that can be made in honour, you have power
 to recompence, and what reputation is it that reward will not
 satisfy? as for the Bear which lost his skynne, the Wolfe
 and his wyfe dame Arsewind, that lost their shooes, you may
 in recompence (since Bellin hath confest himself a party in this
 foule murder) bestow him and his substance on the parties
 grieved: as for Reynard, he will go and besiege his Castle
 and having arrested his person, hang him up by the tale of
 Armes without further trial.

CHAP. 16.

How *Bellin* the Ramme, and his linage, were given to the
 Beare and the Wolfe.

TO this motion of the Lybard the King consented, so that
 Firapell forthwith went to the prison, where the Beare,

fo Reynard the Fox.

and the Wolfe there, and said : my Lords, I bring a free
and generall pardon from the King, with his love, and a re-
cognition of your injuries : which is recompence in some large



manner out of his princely bounty, he is pleased to bestow
upon you both Bellin the Man and his whole generation with
what.

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whatsoever they possesse, and is now confiscate to his Majesty, to hold from hence forth to you and yours till doomes day with full commission to take, kill, and devour them wheresoever you find them, Be it in woods, fields or Mountaines. And also the King granted unto you full power to hunt, kill or bound Reynard the Fox wheresoever you find him or any of his Image or generation: and of this great priviledge you shall receive letters Patents at your pleasure, with onely a reservation of your fealty and homage to be due to his Majesty which I advise you to accept, for it will redound much to your honours. Thus was the peace made betwene the King and these nobles by the Lybard, and Bellin the Kanne was forthwith slaine by them; and all these Priviledges both the Wolfe hold to this houre, nor could ever any reconciliation be made betwene them and the Kanne kindred. When this peace was thus finished, the King for joy thereof, proclaimed a feast to be held for the next daies after, which was done with all solemnitie.

As this feast came all manner of wilde Beasts, for it was universally knowne through the whole Kingdome, nor was there wanting any delight or pleasure that could be imagined, as musick, dancing, masking, and all princely recreations: as for severall meates, they were in such abundance, that the Court stired a house which could not be emptied. Also to this feast resorted abundance of feathered Fowle, and all other Creatures that held peace with his Majesty, and no one missing but the Fox onely. After this feast had thus continued in all pompe the space of eight daies: about high noon came Laprell the Cony before the King and Queen, as they sat at dinner, and with a heave and lamentable voice, said: My gracious and great Lord, have pittie upon my misery, and attend my complaint, which is of great violence, force and murder, which Reynard the Fox would yesterday have committed against me: as I passed by the Castle of Malepardus, where standing without his gates, attired like a pilgrime, I supposing to passe peaceably by him towards my nest: he cross my way, saying his Weeds so devoutly, that I saluted

of Reynard the Fox:

saluted him: but he returning no answer, stretcht forth his right foot, and gave me such a blow one the neck between the



head and shoulders, that I imagined my head had been stricken from my bodie: but yet so much memorye was left me that I leapt from his claws, though most grievously hurt and wounded

The Moralling
By the giving of Belling u, is his enemies shewed that when simple men give themselves to pride & vain-glory, they are overtaken by their enemies, & made slaves to shame and destruction. By the complaint of the Coney, is shewed that when the weak will believe the faire shews of the strong and cruell, and so commit their safeties to their enemies mercies, they seldom escape with life, or if they doe by some hidden providence yet it is not without ever some maine either to their bodies or reputations. The complaint of the Roake, shews that when the evil man sleepeth or seemeth to have least power or in-

The pleasant History

rent of wicked-
nesse that
then his
thoughts are
most busied &
laborious to
destroy the in-
nocent, and the
mischiefe is
more violent,
then when he
lyeth most ap-
perant and
publisheth
himselfe ano-
pen enemy
wherefore the
simple and in-
nocent ought
at such times
to be most
fearefull, and
to keepe far-
thest our of his
danger.

wounded. At this he grieved extreamlie, because I esca-
ped onelie of one of my eares he utterlie depriued me which I
beseech your Majestie in your royall nature to pittie, and that
this bloudie murderer may not lye thus to afflict your poore
Subjects. Now whilst the Coney was thus speaking to the
King, there came flying into the Court Corbant the Keeper,
who comming before the King, said: Great King, I beseech
you humble t. heare me and pittie the complaint I shall ut-
ter: for it is that I went this morning with Sharbeake my
wife to recreate our selves on the Heath, and there we found
Reynard the Fox laid on the ground like a dead carcase, his
eyes staring, his tongue lolling out of his mouth, like a dead
Hound, so that we wondering at his strange plight, began to
feele and touch his bodie but found no life therein at all: then
went my wife (poore carefull soule) and laid her head to his
mouth, to see if hee dyed any breath: which she had no sooner
done, but the foule murderer awaiting his time, snatcht her
head into his mouth and bite it quite off. At that I screamed
out and cryed: What is me, what misfortunes are these? but
presently the murderer start up and reached at me with such a
bloody intent, that with much trembling and anguish I was
faine to flie up in to a tree, where I saw him devour up my wife
in such terrible manner that the very thought is death to me
in the repeating.

This massacre finished, the murderer departed, and I
went to the place, and gathered the feathers of my lost wife,
which here I humbly present before your majestie, beseeching
you to doe me justice, and in such manner to revenge mine in-
jurie, that the world may speak fame of your great excellence,
for thus to suffer your Lawes, Protections, and safe Conduits
to be violatred and broken, will be such disreputation and scan-
dall to your Crowne and Dignitie, that your very neighbours
and Colleagues will note and point at your remissenesse:
besides the sufferance of the evil will make you guiltie of the
trespasses which arise from such sufferance: But to your
great considerations I leave it: since I know your Majesties
own goodnesse will make you carefull of your honour & royalty

of Renard the Fox.

CHA P. 17.

How the King was angry at these complaints, took counsell for revenge, and how Reynard was forewarned by Grimbard the Brock.

The royal King was much maked with anger, when he heard these Complaints both of the Coney and the Wooke, so that his eyes darting out fire, amongst the beames of Majestie, his countenance was draedfull and cruell to looke on, and the whole Court trembled to behold him. In the end he said: Wy my Crovane and the truth I beermoze reberance and owe unto the Quene my Wyfe, I will so rebenge these outrages committed against my Crovyn and Dignitie, that goodnesse shall adoze me, and the wicked shall die with the remembrance: his falshood and flatterie shall no moze get belief in me.

As this his journey to Rome and to the Holy-land? are these the fruits of his male, his staffe, and other oznaments becoming a debout Pilgrim? Well, he shall find the reward of his Treasons: but it was not my belief, but the perswasion of my Quene, noz am I the first that hath been deceived by that soft gender, since many great spirits have fallen through their inticements. And this said: he commanded all that were about him, both Noble, woorthy and eberie discret spirit to asst him with their Countell, and to laie him down such sure ground for his rebenge, that his honour and Royaltie might be a new rebibed, and ebery offender made to know and fele the heabie pvice for their most unjust actions.

Ifegrim the Wolfe and Bruine the Beare, hearing the Kings words, were wonderfully well apaid, and doubt not but now to gaine their full rebenge against Reynard: yet still they kept silence and spake not a word. Insomuch that the King being much maked with their dumbnesse: and noting that none durst frellie deliber their opinions: He began to bend his forehead: but the Quene after solemn reberance said to the King: Mon Sire, Pour Dien croyez mei routes

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chofes qu'on vous, & ne jurez point legerement Sir, it
is not the part of any excellent wifdome to believe or proceff
in any thing till the matter be made moft apparant and preg-
nant to his knowledg : neither fhould both his ears, be in-
gaged to any complaint, but one ever referbed to enter-
tained the defence of any accused : For many times the accufer
exceideth

of Reynard the Fox.

exceedeth the accused in injurie. And therefore Audire Alteram Pertem, to hear the other party, is the act of perfect Justice : For my own part whatsoever I have erred yet I have strong ground for my persuasion, and whether Reynard be good or bad, yet it stands with your Excellencie not to proceed against him, but by the true form of your Lawes : for he hath no power to escape you, but must obey whatsoever your severity can impose upon him. When the Queen had thus spoken, Firapell the Libard to second her intreatie said . My Lord, the Queen hath spoken graciously, and I see not wherein your Majesty can strale from her judgement : Therefore let him take the due triall of your Lawes, and being found guiltie of the trespasses whereof he is accused, let him be summoned : and if he appear not before your feast be ended, to clear himselfe or submit to your mercy, : then may your Highnesse proceed against him as it shall seem best to your pleasure.

To this speech Hegrim the Wolfe replied Sir Firapell, for my own part, I thinke not any of this assemblie will dissent from your counsell, so it may stand with the pleasure of my Lord the King : yet this I dare maintaine, that whatsoever Reynard shall clear himselfe of these and a thousand such like trespasses which shall be brought against him : yet I have that lodgeth in my bosome, which shall approve he hath forfeited his life : but at this time his absence shall make me silent, onelie touching the treasure of which he hath informed his Majesty to lie at Crickenpit in Hulsterloe, there never came a fasser information from the mouth of any creature : for it was a lie made out of malice to wrong me and the Bear and get himselfe libertie to rob and spoile all that passe by his house as now he doth : but notwithstanding I hold it meet that all things be done as shall seeme good to his Majesty, or you Sir Firapell : Yet this belieue, that if he had meant to have appeared, he had been here long since, for he had summons given him by the Kings Messenger.

To this the King answered, I will have no other course of summoning him, but command all that owe me allegiance, or respect mine honour, that forthwith they make themselves

The Morall.

The anger of the Lyon at the Foxes trespasses, shewes the disposition of a good Prince, which is ever moved and offended, when his good subjects are injured. And the persuasion of the Queene and the Libard, shewes the true temperance which every Prince should use when he administreth Justice.

The moderate, yet biting words of the Wolfe, shewes the cunning malice of a subtle foe, who before such as are of his contrary fashion, will conceale the violence of his malice : that so he may gaine a more quiet attention and then mixing his calmes words with

The peasant History

bitre: promises and doubtfull injuries, doth the uttermost he can to poyson the reputation of him he hateth.

The Brookes going to the Fox, sheweth the office of a true friend, which doth give warning and advise to them: they love, when they see them unne into evill courses.

The Foxes carelesnesse shews the true nature of a desperate man, that when hee hath plunged himselfe into the depth of evill, hath nothing but an audacious countenance, and an impudent shew to make him seem innocent yet evermore his heart is nipt with the stinging of his conscience as oft as he alone which is the

readle for the warre: and at the end of six daies appeare before me with their Bowes, Gunnes, Bombards, Pikes, and Halberds: some on horse-backe, some on foot, for I will bessege Mallepardus instantly, and destroy Reynard and his generation from the earth for ever: this if any dislike, let him turne his backe, that I may know him for mine enemy. And they all cried with one voice, we are ready to attend your Majestie.

When Grimbard the Brocke heard this determination he grew exceeding sorry (though this sorrow was desperate) and stealing from the rest of the company, hee ranne with all speed possible to Mallepardus, neither sparing bush nor hyer, pale nor taile: and as he went he said to himselfe. Alas my deare Uncle Reynard, into what hazards art thou tumbled, having but one step betwixt thee and thy death, or at the best thine everlasting banishment? Well may I grieve for thee, since thou art the top and honour of my house, art wise and politicke, and a friend to thy friends when they stand in neede of thy counsell, for with thy sweete language thou canst enchant all creatures, but all is now bootlesse.

With such manner of lamentations as these, came Grimbart unto Mallepardus, and found his Uncle Reynard standing at the Castle gates, who had newly gotten two young Pigeons as they came creeping out of their nest to try how they could learne to fly. But now beholding his Nephew Grimbart, he staid and said, Welcome my best beloved Nephew, the onely hee I esteeme above all my kindred: Surely you have runne exceeding fast, for you sweate wonderfully: what newes man how runnes the squares at the Court? I said Grimbard exceeding ill with you for you have forfeited both your life honour and estate. The King is up in armes against you with horse-men, and foote-men, and souldiers innumerable: besides Iiegrim and Bruine are now in more favour with his Majestie, then I am with you, therefore it is high time you have great care of your selfe, for their envy hath toucht you to the quicke, they have informed against you, that you are a thiefe and a murtherer: and to second their informations, La-prell the Coney, and Corbant the Woebe have made painous com-

of Reynard the Fox.

complaints against you, so that but your shamefull death, I see
no escape or freedom.

testament of a
very offender



Luth (said the Fox) my deare Nephew, if this be the
worst, let no sorrow affright you : but let us be cheerefull and
pleasent together, for though the King and all the Court
would

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would sweare my death, yet will I be exalted aboue them all
well may they prate and jangle, and tire themselves with
their counsels but without the help of my wit and policie,
neither can the Court or Common wealth have any long con-
tinuance. Come then my best Nephew, let us enter into my
Castle and feast. I have a paire of fat Pidgeons for you
whiche are meate of pure and light digestion, I loke not any
thing better, they are young and tender, and may be almost
swallowed whole, for their bones are little other then blood,
yet come I say, my wife Eremelin will receiue you kindly but
by all means report not to her of any dangers, for she is of
soft and melting temper, and it might strike her into suddaine
sicknesse, for women are apt to entertaine grief. When we
have feasted, I will then to morrow earlie in the morning go
with you to the Court, and if I can but attaine speech with
the King, I shall gaine some deap enough, onely this I desire
(dear Nephew) at your hands, that you will stand to me, as
one friend and kinsman ought to do by another. Doubt me
not (said Grimbard) for both my life and goods shall be at your
service. I thanks you Nephew (said the Fox) and you shall
not find me ingratefull. Sir (said the Wreck) be bold of
this that you shall come and make your answer before the
Lords fraile, for none shall dare to arrest or hold you for that
labour the Queen and the Libard have purchas from the
King I am glad of that (said the Fox) no more I thanke a haire
for their worst malice. And this, said they went into Male-
pardus, and found Eremelin sitting amongst her younglings
whopresentlie arose, and receiued the Wreck with all reuer-
ence, and he on the other part saluted her and her children
with hall courtesie: presentlie the two Pigeons to make rec-
die, and they supped together, each taking their part though
none had so much as they desired: then said the Fox Nephew
how like you my children Rossel and Reynardine? I hope they
will do honour to our familie, they are forwardlie I assure you,
for the one latehe caught a Chicken, and the other hath killed
a Pullet: they are also good Dickers, and can both deceive the
Lapwing and the Mallard: I tell you true, I dare already
adventure

of Reynard the Fox.

adventure them farre, onely I mean first to instruct them how to escape the Wytns, and to prebent both the Huntsman and his Hounds, they are of the right haire Nephew, and like me, both in countenance and qualitie, they play grinning, intangle scowling, and kill smiling: this is the true nature of the Fox, and in this they are perfect, which is great pride unto me.

CHAP. 18.

How the Fox repenting his finnes, doth make his confession and is absolved by the Brock.

UNCLE, said the Brock, you may be proud that you have such toward children, and reioice because they are of my bloud. I thanke you Nephew, (said the Fox) but I know your journey hath made you wearie, therefore you shall go to your rest: to which the Brock consented, so they laid them down upon straws litter, and all slept soundlie, but the Fox, whose heart was heauie with sorowe, late studying how he might best excuse himselfe before the King. But as soon as the morning began to rise from the tops of the Mountaines he arose and went, with Grimbard towards the Court, yet before he went, he tooke leave of his wife and children, and said, Thinke not mine absence long (deare wife and children) for I must go to the Court with my Cousin Grimbard, and though my state be more then ordinarie, yet take no affright thereat, and what tidings soever you hear, yet consider all things for the best, and be carefull of your selves, and keep my Castle close and well guarded: as for my self, doubt not but I will defeat all mine enemies. Alas Reynard (said his wife) what moves you to take this sudding journey: the last time you were at the Court you know what dangers you escaped, and you vowed never to see it againe. Will you now run a second hazard? Dame (said the Fox) the occurrences of the world are diuers and uncertaine, and we are subject to the strokes of Fortune: but rest you content, there is necessity that I goe, and I hope my stay shall not be a bove five daies at

The Pleasant History

at the uttermost, and so embracing his wife and children he tooke leaue and departed: and as they iourned ower the Heath, Reynard said to the Wock: Nephew, since I was last shziben. I habe committed many sins, therefore I beseech you let me make befoze you my confession, that I may passe with lesse trouble thzough my woest dangers.



Then

of Reynard the Fox:

Then he proceeded and said: It is true I prophesied, that I made the Bear receive a great wound for the Male which I did cut off his skinne, and I caused the Wolfe and his wife to



he stript of his shoes: I appeased the King onely with false-
hood, I fained a conspracie aganst his Majesties life by the
Bear and the Wolfe, when there was never any such deter-
mination:

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The Morall.

The Foxes
shriving him
self to the
Brock, shewes
the Art of all
dissemblers,
which ever
make devout-
on their cloak.
By the buying
of the foale
of the Mare, is
shewed, that
when proud
men make in-
struments of
wiser then
themselves, &
such as affect
not their qua-
lities, th. ser-
vice they do
them is ever
to bring them
to mi chiefe,
&c. Also when
ambition or
covetousness
blinds men,
and makes
them trust
onely in their
own skill and
knowledge,
that then they
are ever so-
dainly over-
taken with one
mischiefe or
another, and
made a mock
and scorn to
their foes, and

mination: also I repozed of great treasure to be hid in Hulsterloe, but it was as fabulous as the rest: I flew Kyward and betrayed Bell in, I wounded the Conie, and killed Dame Sharpebeake, the Bookes wife. Lastly, I forgot at my last byrte one great deceit which I committed, but I will reveale it, and thus it was.

As I went talking with the Wolfe betweene Houthlust and Eiverding, wee beheld a goodly Bay Mare grazing, with a blacke Foale by her side, which was exceeding fat and wanton: the Wolfe at that instant was almost dead for hunger to such that he intreated me to goe to the Mare, and know if she would sell her foale? I went and demanded the question. The Mare said, he would willingly sell it for Wine: I then asked the price? and she said, the price was written in her hinder foote, which if I pleased I might come and read at my pleasure, but I that well understood her politicke anger, said, It is true that I cannot reade, neither do I desire to buye your Foale, onelie I am a messenger from the Wolfe, who hath a great desire to have it. Then (said the Mare) let him come himselfe, and I will give him satisfaction: Then went I to the Wolfe, and told him what the Mare said, assuring him that if he pleased, he might have his bellie full of the foale, provided he could read, for the price was written in the Mares hinder foot. Read (said the Wolfe) what should tell me; I can, Cousin read both Latin, French, English and Dutch, I have studied in Oxford, and argued with many Doctors, I have heard manie state lie plaies, and striven in the place of Judgement: I have taken degrees in both the Lawes, nor is there that writing which I cannot decipher: So desiring me to stay for him there; away he went to the Mare and craved that he might see and read the price of the foale: to which the mare consented, and lifting up her hinder foot, which was newlie shod with strong iron, and seaven sharp nailes heads, as the Wolfe leapt thereon, she smote him so full upon the fore-head, that she threw him over and over and he lay in a dead sound whilist a man might have ridden a mile and better which done, I awake rored the Mare with her Colt.

and

of Reynard the Fox.

and left the poore Wolfe bloodie and breunded, in so much
that he howled like a Dog: then went I to him, and said Sir
Negrin, deare Uncle, how doe you, have you eaten too much
of the Colt? indeede you are unkinde, that will giue mee no
part with you. I went your message honestlie, me thinkes
you have out slept your dinner, good Uncle tell me what was
written under the Mares foote, was it in Rose or Rime? in-
deede I would faine knowe it: I thinke it was a Rych-song, for
I heard you sing: nay, you shew your Schooller-ship in all the
Arts.

such as led
them blind-
fold into the
evill.

Alas, Reynard, (alas said the Wolfe) - I pray you forbear
to disdain me, for I am extremelie wounded, and mine an-
guish is so great, that a heart of flint would pity mee The
damned Mare on her long legge hath an iron foot, and I
tooke the nattes to have beene Letters, on which I looked,
she hit me so full on the head I thinke my scull is cloben.
Deare Uncle (said the Fox) is this truth which you tell me?
beleeve it, you make me wonder, why I tooke you for one of
the greatest Clarks in this Kingdome: Well I perceibe the
old Proverb is now made good in you: The greatest Clarks
are not the wisest men. Poore men sometimes may outstrip
them in judgement, and the reason is, you great Schollers
 studie so much, that you grow dull, in that you so much over-
labour. And thus with these mocks and taunts, I brought
the Wolfe within a hairens breadth to destruction. And now
faire Nephew, I have unladed my Conscience, and delibered
as many of my sins as I can call to my remembrance, where-
fore I beseech you let me receibe absolution and penance, and
then come what chance shall at the Court, I am armed
against all dangers. Then Grimbard said your trespasses are
great and hainous, nevertheless who is dead, must abide
dead. And therefore here I freely absolve you, upon assu-
rance of your heartie repentance: onelie the contempt you
made in sending him Kywards head, and the abuse of so many
falshoods will lie heaue upon you. Why (said the Fox) be
that will live in the world to see this, heare that, and
understand the third, must ever conuerse with affliction.

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No man can touch Honey, but he must lick his fingers. I often feele touches of repentance, but reason and our will are eber in continuall combat, so that I of stand still as at my toits end, and crie out against my sinnes, feeling a detestation of them. But pzetently the world and her vanities appear to me againe: and tohen I find so many stones and rubs in my way and the examples of the crafty Prelates, and rich Priests to inchant me, that I am forthwith taken againe: the world fills me with covetousnesse, and the flesh with wantonnesse; so that losing my good resolutions, I am onely for Hell and wickednesse I heare their singing, piping, laughing playing, and all kind of mirth and I see their words and actions so contrary that nothing is moze incertain and barious: from them I learn my lying, and from Lords Court my flatterie: for certainly Lords Ladies, Priests, and Clerkes, use most dissimulation. It is now an offence to tell great men truth: and he that cannot dissemble, cannot live. I habe oft heard men speak truth, yet they habe still gras'd it with falshood: for untruths many times happen into discourse unwillingly and without knowledg: yet having a handsome garment, it eber goes for current. (Deat Ppphet)

It is now a fashion to lie, flatter, sooth, threaten, pray, and curse, and to do any thing that may keep the weak in subjection; who doe other wise is held foolish: but he that cannot wimble falshood, in truthes kerchiefe hath neither Art nor cunning: but he that can do it, and deliber error without stammering, he may do wonders; he may wear Scarlet, Gray or Purple: he shall gaine both by the Lawes spirituall and tempozall, and write himself conquerour in ebery designement. There be many that imagin they can lie neartlie, but their cunning oft failes them; so that when they thinke to fed of the fat mozels, they slip quite besides their trenchers. Others blunt and foolish, and for want of method, marre all their discourses, but he that can gibe to his lie a fit and an apt conclusion, can pronounce it without rattling, and make it as truth faire and amiable: What is the man and woorthie of admiration. But to speak truth is

of Reynard the Fox.

no running, it neber makes the Debill laugh: to lie well and with a grace: to lift up wrong aboue right to make mountaines and build Castles in the aire: to make men juggle and lock thozeto their fingers, and all for the hope of gaine onely. This, Nephew, is an Art beyond expression: yet ebermore of the end cometh miserie and affliction. I will not denie but sometimes men may jest or lie in small things: for he that will speak all truthe, shall sometimes speak out of season. To plaie Placebo, may now and then be bene with: for who so speakes alwaies truth, shall find many rubes in his way: men may erre forned and mend it by counsell, since no trefasse but hath his mercy: nor any wisdome but at sometime dul- leth. Then (said the Wock) Uncle you are so wise you cannot faile in any purpose, and I would grow enamoured of you, your reasons so far surpasse my understanding, that it is no need of your shifte, for your self may both play the Priest and confessor: you know the world in such sort, that it is impossible for any man to halt before you.

With these and such manner of discourses they held on their journie towards the Court: yet the Foxes heart (for all his faire shew) was sad and heabie, yet countenance betozaied it not: but he past without amazement thzough all the presse of the Court, eben till he came to the presence of the King, and the Wock march'd close to his side, saying, Uncie be not afraid, but be of good chare, it is courage of whom Fortune is eber enamoured. Then (said the Fox) Nephew you say true, and your comfort abatles me, and so on he went casting many disoainfull countenances on those he lik'd not: or as who would say, Here I am: what is it that the proudest of you dare object against me: he beheld there many of his kin which he knew lobed him not, as the Otter, the Bever, and others which I will name hereafter: and many he saw which lobed him. As soone as he was come in the view of the King, he fell down humblie on his knee, and spake as followeth.

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CHAP. 9.

How Reynard the Fox exculed himself before the King
and of the Kings answer.

That diuine power from whom nothing can be hid, save
my Lord the King, and my Ladie the Quene, and gibe
them grace to knowe who hath right and who hath wrong, for



of Reynard the Fox:

here are many false shewes in the world, and the countenance bewraies not the heart: which I wish were openly revealed, and that every creatures trespass stood written in his forehead, albeit it cost me the uttermost of my substance, that you (my soveraine Lord) know me as merely as my selfe, and how I dispose my selfe early and late, labouring in your service. For which cause onely malice makes all her complaints against me, striving to thrust me out of your grace and favour. Insomuch that out of my anguish I must needs cry shame upon them which have so deadly belied me. Nevertheless I know that you my Lord, and soveraign Lady are so excellent in your Judgement, that you will not be carried away with falshoodes: and therefore I most humbly beseech your Majesties, to take into your wisdom all things according to the right of your Lawes: for it is Justice I looke for, and desire that he which is found guilty, may feele the waight of his punishment. For beleve it, dread Lord, it shall be knowne before I depart from your Court who I am, that I cannot flatter, but will shew my face with an unblemished forehead;

All they that were in the presence stood amazed, and wondred when the Fox spake so stoutly. But the King with a stately countenance said: Reynard, I know you are expert in fallacies, but words are now too weake to reliebe you. I beleve this day will be the last of your glory and disgrace: for me I will not hide you much, because I intend you shall live but a short time, the love you doe beare me, you have shewed to the Coney and the Wke, and your requitall shall be a short life on earth. The ancient saying is, A Pot may passe long to the water, but in the end comes broken home. And your evils have so long succeeded, that they will now pay you the hazard at these words Reynard was stricken into a great fear and with'd himselfe farre away, yet he be thought himselfe that now he must beare those, what fortune soever came: Whereupon he said (My soveraine Lord the King) it is but Justice that you heare me answer my accusations, for were my faults more hainous then enby can make them, yet requitie

The pleasant History

gibes the accused leaue eber to answer. I haue with my counsaile done you serbice in former times, and may no lesse still: I haue neber started from your Majesties, but walked by your side, when others haue gon from your presence: if then my enemies with their slanders shall preballe against me, blaine me not to complaine. Time hath bene it was otherwise, and time may bring it to the old course, for the actions of good serbants ought not to be for gotten. I see here dibers of my kiudred and friends which now make no value of me, whom I can appraze goe about to depzthe you of the best Serbant you possesse. Can your Majestie imagine if I had bene guiltie in the least imagined crime, that I would thus voluntarily haue made my appearance euen in the throng of mine enemies? Or it had bene too much indiscretion, nor would the liberty I had, bene so easily subjected. But heauen be thanked I know mine innocence, and dare confront my worst enemy. Yet when my kinsman Grimbart first brought me the tidings, I must confesse I was halfe distract with anger, and had I not bene in the censure of his Church I had apper'ed ere they had left complaining, but that deratued me. And I wandzed with sorow on the heath, till I met with my Uncle Martin, the Ape, who farre exceedeth any Pries in Pastozall busines, for he hath bene Atturney to the Bishop of Camericke any time this nine yeeres: and seeing me in this great agony of heart, he said, Deare Cousin, why are you thus heaby in spirit, and why is your countenance dejected? grieve is easie to carry when the burthen is diuided amongst friends: For the nature of a true friend is to behold and relieue that, which anguish wil not suffer the oppressed to see or suffer. When I answered him, You say true deare Uncle, and the like is my fortune, for sorow is without cause laid upon me, and of that I am not guilty, I am accused by those I ranked with my best friends: As namely the Coney, who came yesterdai to my house as I was saying Mattins, Saying that he was trabailing towards the Court, but was at that time both hungry and weary: and therefore requested of me some meat, I willingly consented, took him in and gave

of Renard the Fox.

gave him a couple of Pancakes and Sweet Butter: For it was on Wednesday, on which day I never eat flesh. Besides it was then a fast, by reason the feast of Whitsontide

The Morall.

The boldness of the Foxes appearance & speech, shewes the impudence of a desperate offender, that having nothing but his owne boldnes to bolster out his cause, still cries for Iustice and hearing, not so much to excuse himselfe as to accuse others, and by digressions & extravagant speech to bring all those into disgrace which are able to testify any thing against him. By the tale of the Apes going for him to Rome, and his threatening the King, is shewed the ignorance and foolish blindnesse of the old times which would thrust Kings under the Popes Curse, and make them



was nere. At which time he must have censed and prepa- red hearts, Et vos estote Parati. Now when he had almost- well

The Pleasant History



ubj. A to his
 Co. mands,
 though they
 were never so
 hearthensh and
 Diabolically.
 By his excu-
 ling him of the
 crimes against
 the Coney and
 the Rucke, is
 shewed that
 whosoever is
 resolved to doe
 an ill act will
 never make
 conscience to
 chide aloud. Lie
 nor is he ever
 unprovided
 thereof, be-
 cause they are

well refreshed himselfe, my youngest sonne Rossell came in
 and offered to take away what he had left (for you know the
 nature of Childzen is ever to be eating and craving.) But
 presently the Coney smot Rossell on the mouth, that his teeth
 bled and the poore soule fel downe almost in a swoond, which
 when as Reynardine (my eldest sonne) beheld: he forth-
 with leapt to the Coney, and caught him by the head, and
 questionlesse had slaine him, had I not come to the rescue.
 which done, I went and gave my sonne correction for his
 fault. But presently Laprell the Coney posts to my Lord
 the King, and informes what I (my selfe) sought meanes to
 murder him. Thus I am accused without cause and brought
 in danger, that in truth have best cause to accuse others. But
 not long after came Corbrant the Woke flying to my house
 with a sad noyse, and demanding what hee ailed: Hee an-
 swered: Alas, my wife is dead. I craved the cause, hee said:
 A dead Hare lying on the heath full of mashes and Wormes,
 of which she had eaten so much, that the wormes had gnawed

of Reynard the Fox.

her throat in sunder; and without speaking to mee any more words, away he flew, leaving me much amazed, and not knowing that I flew his wife, which how could I by any possible meanes doe considering she flew in the aire, and I walke a-foot on the ground? Thus (deare Uncle) you see how I am slandered, but it may be it is for my old sinnes, and therefore I beare it with more patience. Then said the Ape to me Nephew, you shall goe to the Court and disprove these falsehoods. Alas, Uncle (quoth I) it cannot be, for the Archdeacon hath put me in the Popes curse, because I gave counsell to the Wolfe to forsake his holy orders, when he complained to mee of his unbleness to endure that strickt life, and much fasting: of which Art I now much repent mee, since he repayeth my love with nothing but hatred and malice, and with all the slanders he can invent, pierceth his Majesty daily against me. These things (deare Uncle) bring me to my wits end, for of necessity I must goe to Rome for absolution, and in mine absence, what injury may happen to my wife and children through the malice of these bloody teachers, any one may guess: whereas on the other part were I free of the Popes curse, then I could goe to the Court, and plead mine owne cause, and turne their malice into their owne basomes.

Then said the Ape, Cousin cast off your sorrow, for I know the way to Rome well, and am experienced in these busineses for I am called the Bishops Clarke, therefore I will goe thither, and enter a plea against the Archdeacon, and in spite of his will, bring you from the Pope a well sealed absolution.

But man, I have many great friends there, as mine Uncle Simon and others Prientour, Wayt-Scath, and the like all which will stand unto me: besides I will not goe unfurnished of money, for I know paysters are best heard with gifts, and the Law hath no feet to walke on but money: a true friend is tried in necessities, and you shall finde mee without dissimbling; therefore cast off your griefe, and goe to the Court as soon as you can, for I will presently to Rome, and in the meane time, here I quit you of all your sinnes and offences, and onely put them upon my selfe: when you come to the

the garment, which he ever cloathes his knavery with.

By the Apes friend is

Rome, as Simon or Simanie

Prientour or take ill, and

Wait Scath or doe mischief,

is shewed the wickednesse of

these dayes in Rome, & how

by much

meanes a man might pur-

chase any thing he

went about.

By his insinuating with the

Apes wife

(who was then a great fa-

vorite about the Queene) is

shewed, the art of a subtil

head, that to gaine himselfe

a strong party will not spare

any false invention, for a-

gainst those great ones

dares not the inferior open

their lips.

By the sight of the Coney &

the Roke, is shew'd how

The peasant History

soon the weak
are terrified &
dinted with
the threat-
nings of the
strong and
mighty, that it
is better to sit
down with
wrong, then to
cowerd with
one that hold-
eth too strong
a party. And
also how by
such advantage
the offender
takes heart &
thereon
grounds the
strength of his
greater inno-
cence
By the Lyons
last accusation
and the Foxes
direction, is
shewed that
when truth &
authority stand
up against the
wicked, that
then study
with his owne
conscience,
he is able to
abid no lon-
ger but with
silence and
dowae cast
look, he shews
plaineiy the
guile which
lies within
him.

Court, you shall finde there Dame Ruknaw my wife, her thad
sisters, and my three children, with others others of our fa-
mily. I pray you salute them from me, and shew them mine
occasions: my wife is exceeding wise, and she shall finde that
her distressed friends shall not shrink when I can help them.
I know she is faithfull and as behoves her, will never leave
her friend in danger. At the uttermost, if your oppression be
more then you can beare, send presently to me to Rome, and
not an enemy that you have, be it King or Quene, or Sub-
ject, even from the highest to the lowest, but I will presently
put them in the Popes curse, and send back such an Inter-
diction, that no holy or sacred duty shall be performed till you
have right and Justice restored you.

This assured your selfe I can easily performe, for his helpe-
nesse is very old and lit is regarded, onel ynow Cardinall
Pare-gold bareth all the sway in the Contry, as being
young, and rich in many friends: besides, he hath a concu-
bine: of whom hee is farre enamoured: that he denies no-
thing she demandeth: his lady is my piece and will doe
whatsoever I request her: therefore Quosin, goe boldly to the
King, and charge him to do you Justice, which I know hee
will, since he understands the Lawes are made for the use of
all men.

This (my Sovereigne Lord the King) when I heard him
speake I smiled, and with great joy came thither to relate unto
you the truth: that can charge me with any Creature within this
Court, that can charge me with any trespass whatsoever,
and prove it by testimony as the Law requireth, or if other-
wise, hee will appose himselfe against me, person to person,
grant me but a day, and equall lists, and in combat I will
maintain my innocence against him, provided he be equall to
me in birth and degree: this Law hath ever thither a good con-
stant, and I hope neither in me, for me, or by me, it shall now
be broken.

When all the assembly of Beasts heard this, they were
dumbe, and amazed to behold his stoutnesse. As for the Coney
and the Kooke, they were so feared they durst not speake but
obediently

of Reynard the Fox.



privately stole away out of the Court, and being farre on the plaine, they said, This diabolish murderer hath such Art in his falshood, that no truch can looke with better countenance, which onely our selves know, but have no other witnesse, therefore it is better wee depart, then try combat with him, which is so much too strong for us, and so away they went.

Isgrim the Wolfe, and Braine the Weare, were very sad when they saw these two forsake the Court: whereupon the King said, If any will appeale the Fox, let him come forth, and he shall be heard: Yesterday wee were laden with complaints, where are they to day? here is the Fox ready to answer. Then said the Fox, My soveraigne Lord, absence makes impudent accusers bold, when presence daunts them, as your Highnesse may see both by the Coney and the Woke: What it is to trust the malice of these Cowards, and how soon they may confound good men: but for me it matters not: nevertheless had they (at your Majesties commandement) but aske me forgiveness, I had quickly cast all their offences behind

The pleasant History

behind mee, for I will neber shake hands with charity, nor
euer hate or complaine of mine enemies: my revenge I leave
to heauen, and Justice to your Majesties. Then said the King,
Reynard, you speake well, if the inward hart be like the out-
ward shew, yet I feare your grieve is not such as you expresse
it: It farce surmounts it, said the Fox: No (quoth the King
for I must charge you with one foule treason, which is,
when I had pardoned all your great transgressions, and you
had promised me to goe a pilgrimage to the holy Land: when
I had furnished you with malle, with staffe, and all things nec-
essary for that holy order, then in the greatest despite you sent me
backe in the malle by Bellin the Ham, the head of Kyward the
Bare, a thing so notoriously to my disgrace and dishonour,
that no treason can be fouler. This you have no colour to de-
nie, for Bellin (our Chaplain) at his death revealed the whole
processe, and the same reward which he then gained the same
you shall receiue, or else right shall faile mee.

At this sentence Reynard grew so fere afraid, that he knew
not what to say, but looked with a pittifull countenance upon
all his kindred which stood round about him: his colour went
and came, and his heart fainted, but none lent him either helpe
or foot to helpe him: then the King said, Thou dissembling
and false Traytor, how art thou now dumbe? But the Fox
being full of anguish, fetcht a sigh as if his heart would have
broke, so that ebery Beast pittied him, save onely the Beare
and the Wolfe, which rejoyced to behold his sorrow.

CHAP. 20.

How Dame Rukenaw answered for the Fox to the King
and of the parable she told.

Dame Rukenaw the she Ape (being Aunt unto Reynard
and a great favorer of the Queenes) was much grieved
when she saw this distraction, and it was well for the Fox
that she was in the presence: for she was exceeding wise, and
durst boldly speake: and therefore rising up (after reherance
done) she said, My Lord the King, you ought not to be posses-
sed with

of Reynard the Fox:



with anger, when you sit in judgement, for it becommeth not
nobility to be hold of reason: it is discretion which should
only accompany you in that reason: for mine olone part I
think I knowe the Lawes as well as some which beare furred
Gownes, for I have read many, and put some in use: It is
well knowne, I had eber in the Popes pallace a bed of strato
when

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The Morall.

By the shee Apes answering for the Fox, is shewed how apt weak women are to be flattered into any beliefe, in which they may either expresse their pity, or gaine glory. Also it shewes the verifying of the old proverb, That a Friend in Court, is ever worth a pound in a mans purse.

By the violence of her defence, is shewed, the true nature of a woman that evermore runs into extreames, and so shee may doe the good or evill she intends, will not keep any thing concealed which may any way work for her purpose. nor yet any thing

When other Beasts lay on the bare ground, and I was ever suffered to speak freely without interruption, because I talked not beyond mine experience. It is Senecas opinion, that Princes are bound to doe Justice to all men, noz may the law waver or halt with any partiality. I doe not thinke but if every man which standeth here should call to account all the actions of his life, he could not chuse but pity much the estate of my poore kinsman Reynard; and therefore I wish every one to know himselfe, for none so sure but they may fall. and for him that never erred, he is so good he needeth no amendment; To doe amisse and mend it by counsaile, is humane and manly: but to trespassse and still gallop forward in iniquitie, is devilish and unsufferable: the holy Booke saith, Be mercifull and judge not, least you be judged. And in another place when the Pharisees brought a woman taken in adultery, and would have stoned her to death, asked our Lord what he said thereto: he answered: which of you all is without sinne let him cast the first stone: but they all departed and left her: In mine opinion it is so here to day, for here be many that finde straws in others eyes, but see not the beames in their owne: he that falleth off, and in the end ariseth and cometh to mercy, cannot be saied to be damned: Goodnesse never forsaketh her owne servants. This counsaile, would some take to their hearts, the day would not appeare so dark as it doth to my Cousin Reynard. It is well knowne that both his Grandfather and Father ever bare greater reputation in this Court, then either Bruine or Ilegrim, or their whole generation. Alas when have their counsailes or wisdomes been worthe to have held comparison with those of my cousin Reynard; why, the passages of the world are to them Prophecies which they understand not, and the Court is turned topsie turvy by his absence: the evill are now advanced and the good suppressed: but how this can long indure I see not, Since the end of their labour is but the ruine of our Majestie.

To this speech the King made this answer: Dame, had the Fox done that offence to you he hath done to others, your excuse would couch in another nature, you cannot blame me to have

of Reynard the Fox.

bath him, since it is onely he which breaketh my lawes and co-
venants: you have heard him accused of theft, murder and,
treason, how can you then defend him? if you will needs make
him your Saint, then set him upon the Altar and doe him wor-
ship, but beleve it, there is no one good thing in him: and
how eber you imagine, yet search him and you shall finde him
rotten and deformed, there is neither kinsman nor friend (but
your selfe) that will assist him, and therefore your violence
drawes my greater wonder. What companion hath he that
eber thribed by his society, or whom hath he smil'd on, that his
taile hath not a fier dasht not the eye of?

To this the she Ape replied: My Lord, I love him, and
have eber borne him a singular reberance, and I can well re-
count one noble and good action he did in your presence: for
which then you thanked him, though now forgotten: yet
the heaviest thing should eber weigh the most, and men should
keepe a measure in their affections, and not hate, nor love with
violence; since constancy is the greatest ornament of a Prince-
ly nature. We should not praise the day till the evening come,
nor is good counsell availeable but to those which meane to
pursue it.

I remember about some two yeares since, there came to
this court a man and a serpent to have judgement in a doubt-
full controverisie: For the Serpent attempting to goe through
a hedge, was taken by the neck with a snare, so that there was
no way for to escape with life: A certaine man passing
by, the Serpent called and cried unto him, and desired his
helpe, or else he should perish presently. The man taking pit-
tie of him (said) If thou wilt faithfully promise mee neither
to doe me hurt with thy tooth or taile, or other payson about
thee, I will release thee. The Serpent presently swore hee
would not, neither at that time, nor any time hereafter: so the
man unlocked him and set him free, and they went forth and
trabailed together a long season.

At the last the Serpent grew exceeding hungry, and rushing
upon the man offered to kill him: but the man started aside,
and said; What meanest thou to doe? hast thou forgotten
thine

enurged
with may
disgrace those
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the contrary
faction, as
may appear
by the tale of
the Man and
the Serpent,
in which she
sheweth the
wisedome of
the Fox, and
the folly and
disability of
the Beare, the
Wolf and the
rest of the
Foxes eno-
mes.

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thine oath : the Serpent replied no : but I may justly kill thee
since I am compelled thereto by hunger, which cancellerth all
obligations. Then the man said, if it be so, yet gibe me leabe to
live till we may meete with the next passenger which may
judge the controverſie.

The Serpent agréed thereto : so they travelled till they met
with

of Reynard the Fox.

with Tisellin the Raben, & Slinopere his sonne: to whom relating the difference, the Raben adjudged that the Serpent should eat the man, hoping that he and his sonne should get a share also. But the man said, How shall he that is a robber and lives by blood, judge this cause? It must not be one but others, and such as know both Law and equity, that must judge this contention: the Raben is neither just, nor indifferent

Then they travelled till they met the Beare & the Wolf, unto whom also they told the matter, and they adjudged against the man likewise. Then the Serpent began to cast his benome at the man, but the man leapt away, and said, You do me wrong, thus to attempt to kill me, and the Serpent said Hath not Judgement gone twice on my side? Yes (said the Man) by such as are murderers themselves, and such as never kept promise: but I appeale unto the Court, let me be tryed by your King, and what judgement he giveth, I will willingly abide. To this all consented: So they came to the Court before your Majesty, and the Wolves two children came with their father, the one was called Empty-Belly, the other Navel-full, because they sought to devour the Man. So the full processe of the matter was declared to your Majesty: Both the Mans kindnesse and covenant, the Serpents danger and Faith breach, occasioned through the extremity of hunger. Remember how much your Highnes was perplext with their difference, and all your Counsell also: For the Mans sorrow, the Serpents hunger: the Mans goodness, and the Serpents ingratitude, equally raised much pittie in your bosome. But in the end such doubts rose, that not any in your Court was able to judge it. At the last, when no helpe could be found, then you commanded my kinsman Reynard to decide the business: then was he Oracle of the Court, nor was any thing receivd, but what he propounded: But he told your Majesty it was impossible to give true Judgement according to their relations, but if he might see the Serpent in what manner he was fettered, and the greatness of his danger, then he knew well how to give Judgement therein

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therein. Then you commended him, and called him by the title of Lord Reynard, approving that to be done which he had spoken.

Then went the man and the Serpent to the place where the Serpent was snar'd, and Reynard, commanded the Serpent to be fastned as before in the snickle, which being done, then said your Majesty, Reynard what Judgement will you now



give? And he replied, They are now my Lord in the same estate they were before at their first encounter, they have neither wonne nor lost: Therefore this is my censure if it be your Majesties pleasure, If the man will now loose and unbinde the Serpent upon the same promise and oath made formerly unto him, hee may at his pleasure: But if hee thinke that hunger or other inconvenience will make him breake his Faith, then may the man goe freely whither he will, and leave the Serpent bound and intyalled as he first found him: for it is fit that ingratitude be so repayed. This Judgement

of Reynard the Fox.

ment your Majesty then applauded for the most excellent, & held the wisdom of the Fox unlimitable, learning him the praiser of your Honour. When did ever the Beare or Wolfe the like? they can houle or scould, steale, robbe, and eat fat morsels, make their guts cracke with others ruines: and condemne him to death which takes a Chickin: but themselves which kill kine, Oxen, and, Horses, & they goe safe and be accounted as wise as Solomon, Auicen or Aristotle, and their Deeds and Statutes must be read for monuments. But if they come where vertue is to be exercised, they are the first which retreat, and let the simple goe foremost, whilst they follow in the retreat, with shame and cowardise. These (my Lord and their like, are the fooles of these corrupt times, yet destroy Townes, Castles, Lands and People: nor care they whose house burneth, so they may warme them by the fire: for it is their profit onely at which their aime benderh. But Reynard the Fox and all his Family have ever made the honour of the King their renoune and advancement, and applied their counsaill to doe him service, not pride and boasting: this hath bene and is his exercise though it now bee thanklesse. But time I hope will produce whose merit is greatest: Your Majesty saies his kindred is fallen from him and start at his ~~falling~~ ^{falling}: would any but your Highnes had affirmed it, you should then have seene there could not be a thing of greater falshood: But your grace may say your pleasure, nor will I in any word oppose you: for to him that so durst doe, would both he and we bend our forces. It is knowne we dare fight, nor are we descended of any base generation: Your Highnes may call to minde the worth of our Pedigree, and how dearely from time to time they have respected him, willing ever to lay downe their liues & goods for the safety of their noble kinsman Reynard. For mine owne part I am one my selfe, and all be I am the wife of another, yet for him I would not sticke to spend my dearest blood. Besides, I have three full grown Children, which are known valiant and strong in armes, yet for his sake I would adventure them all to the uttermost perill. All be I love them with that deare affection that no other

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her dothercéd mée : my first sonne is called Bitelas which is most active & nimble, my second Fulcumpe, the third is a daughter called Hatanet, a girl that can looke a mans head and picke out lice more nimbly then all the combes in Chri-
stendome : and these three are loving and deare to one ano-
ther : and with that she called them forth unto her, and said



Come my deare children and stand with your kinsman the
Noble Reynard, and with you come all the rest of our ancient
family, and bee all petitioners to the King, that hee will doe to
Reynard the equitie of his Lawes and Kingdome. Then pre-
sently came forth a world of others Beasts, as the Squirrell
and the Firret : for thoselobe Pulline as well as Reynard,
doth ; Then came the Otter and Pantecrote his wife, which
I had all most forgotten, because in former time they had taken
part with the Beare against the Fox, but now they dare
not but obey Dame Rukewaw, for they stood in awe of her
wisdom and greaimes : and with these came above twenty
other

of Renard the Fox.

her Beasts for her sake and stood by Reynard. Then came also dame Atrot and her two sisters, the Weasell and Hermel the Ass, the Wacke, the water Cat and manie others, to the number almost of an hundred, and stood by Reynard with such affection, as if his trouble did equally concerne them. Then said the Shee Ape: My Lord the King, now you may see that my Kinsman hath friends which dare abowe him, and we are your true and loyall Subjects, which will neber faile to doe you faithfull service. Therefore let us with one voyce beg of your Majestie, that Reynard may have Justice and if hee bee not able to disprove his adversaries, and cleare the crimes imputed against him, let the Law passe for we will not murmur to see his destruction.

Then said the Queen to Rukenaw: Thus much I told unto his Majestie yester day, but his anger was so great, he would not give eare to mee. Also the Liberd said, Sir, you must judge according to witnes: for to be govern'd by will, is tyrannous and ignoble. Then answered the King, It is true you informe mee: but the disgrace done to my perticular selfe in Kywards death, and others informations rob'd me of patience, that I had no leasure to looke backe either to Law or reason: Therefore now let the Fox speake boldlie, and if hee can justlie acquit himselfe of the crimes laid against him, I shall gladly restore him his libertie, and the rather for you his deare friends sake, whom I have ever found faithfull and loyall.

Whom infinitlie glad was the Fox when hee heard these words, and said in himselfe, Thanks my noble Aunt a thousand times, thou hast put mee new blossomes on my old rosetes, and set me in a faire path to libertie. I have a negood foot to dance on: and I doubt not but to use my Art of dissimulation to brabellie, that this day shall be remembered for my renowne and victorie.

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CHAP. 21.

How *Reynard* excused himselfe of *Kayward's* death, and all other imputations, got the Kings favour and made relation of certaine Jewels



Then spake Reynard the Fox to the King and said: Alas my soberaigne Lord, what is that you said? Is good Kayward the Hare dead? O where is then Bellin the Kanne or what did he bring to your Majestie at his returne? For it is certaine I delivered him three rich and inestimable Jewels, I would not for the wealth of India they should be detained from you: the chiefe of them I directed to you my Lord the King, the other two to my soberaigne Ladie the Queene. But (said the King) I received nothing but the Head of poore murdered Kayward, for which I executed the Kanne, having confessed the deed to be done by his advice and counsaile. In this truth (said the Fox) then was it me that ever I was borne.

of Reynard the Fox.

bozne, for there are lost the goodliest Jewels that eber were in the possession of any Prince living : would I had died when you were thus defrauded. For I know it will be the death of my wife, nor will she eber henceforth esteeme me. Then said the shee Queene : Deare Prophet, why should you sorowe thus for transitory wealth ? Let them goe, onelie discourse what manner of Jewels they were, it may be we shall finde them againe : If not, the Magician or Alkarin shall labour his books and search all the corners of the earth Besides, whosoever detaines them, shall be curst in all Parishes till he restore them to the Kings Majestie. Aunt (said the Fox) doe not perswade your selfe so, for whosoever hath them, will not restore them to gaine an Empire, they are so goodlie and precious : yet your words doe something appease mee. But whom shall we trust in this corrupt age, when even Sanctite tit selfe walks maske and mistaken ? And then fetchting a deap sigh, with which he guiled his dissimulation, he proceeded on and said, Hearken all you of my stocke and linage, for I will here discover what these rich Jewels were, of which both I and the King are defrauded. The first of them (and which indeed I intended to his Majestie) was a Ring of fine and pure gold and within this Ring next the finger, were engraven Letters enamelled with Azure and Sables, containing three Hebrew names. For my owne part I could neither read nor spell them, but M. Abrion of Trere, the excellent linguist, who knoweth the Nature of all manner of Herbes, Beasts and Minerals : To this famous Jew I shewed the Ring once and he assured me, that they were those three Names which Seth brought out of Paradise when he brought to his Father Adam the Oile of Mercy. And whosoever shall weare these three Names about him, shall never be hurt by Thunder or Lightning, neither shall any Witchcraft have power over him : He shall not be tempted to doe any sinne, neither shall heat or cold eber annoy him. Upon the top of the Ring was encast a most precious Stone of three severall colours : The first like red Christall, and glittering like fire, and that with such brightnes, that if one had occasion to journey by night,

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The Morall

By the relation which the Fox made of the Jewels and their severall vertues and riches is shewed the policy of the wicked which are ever prepared of those baits which they know will soonest catch the minds of them they are to intangle: as wealth, health, honour, & vertue all which be lodged in those Jewels.

As for the stories contained in them the Fox doth moralize them himselfe, shewing in them severally, the imputations he would have the Lyon know to be in his enemies & such examples are evermore bitter, and worke more in the mindes of the hearts, then any vi-



the light thereof was so great as that at Night day. The other colour was white and cleere, as if it had bene burnished, and the vertue of it was to cure any blemish or sorenesse in the eyes, or any part of the body: Also (by stroaking the place agrieved therewithall) it presentlie cured all manner of swellings, head-ache, or any sickness whatsoever: whether it were

of Reynard the Fox.

were benome, weaknesse of stomacke, chollick, stone, strong-
gultion, Fistula, or Canker, ei her outwardly applyed as afoze-
shewed, or inwardly by steeping the stone in water, and then
drinking the same the last colour was greene like grasse mixt
with a few small spots of purple : and the learned affirmed
for truch, that whosoever weares this stone about him, could
neber be banquishd by his enemies, & that no creature were he
neber so strong and hardy, but would yeld unto him, and he
should be victoz day and night tr all places : againe, as farre
as one bye it fasting, into what company soeuer he charid
(all be his worst enemies) yet should he be of them infinitely be
loved, ne should any anger or ebill turne be remembred : Also
if one should be naked in a wast wild field against an hundred
armed enemies, yet should not his hart faile him, but he
should come off with honour and victoz : onely he must be
bly bred, and of no churlish disposition for the King gave no
be rite to any which was not a true Gentleman. Now all
these vertues considered, I thought my selfe unworthe to
keepe it : and therefore I sent it to you my Lord the King,
knowing you to be the excellent of all creatures living and
one on whom all our liues depend, and therefore fittest to be
guarded with so rich a Jewell.

This King I found in my Fathers treasure, and in the
same place also I found a Combe and a glasse Mirrour, which
my wife desired of me : they were Jewells of great wonder and
admiration : these were sent to my Lady the Queene, because
of her grace and mercy extended towards me : As speake of the
Combe ; it can ueber be too much praised, for it was made of
the bone of a noble beast named Panthera, which lieth between
the greater India and earthly Paradise : he is so goodly & faire
of colour, that there is no beautifull colour under heaben but
some splendour thereof appears in him : also the smell of
him is so delicately sweet and wholesome, that the very labour
cureth all infirmities, and for his excelent beauty and rare
odour, all other beasts attend and follow him, for he is the
Whistitan to all their sicknesses. When Panthera bath one
faire bone broad and thinne, which whensoever this beast is

lent speech or
inuestiou
whatsoever-
By the repea-
ting of his and
his Fathers
services, is
shewed, the
ubrill insinu-
ation of offen-
ders, which to
extenuat pre-
sent crimes
call to minde
their good
deeds past
not so much
for the memo-
ry of the good
example, as to
begin a new re-
ward, though
it have bin ue-
ver so often
payd for, for
noble spirits
have ever la-
tender seeing
and are loone
toucht with
the remem-
brance of any
good turnes re-
ceiue d, for it
is an obligati-
on they seldom
cancell.

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flaine, all the vertues of the whole beast doe rest in that bone,
which can neuer be broken, neither euer rot, consume or perishe,



either by fire, water, or other violence: yet it is so light a small
feather may poise it: the smell of it hath that vertue, that
whosoever smells it, taketh delight in no other smell whatso-
ever, and they are presently eased of all manner of diseases
and infirmities; and the heart is chearefull and merry
ever after.

This combe is polished like unto fine silver, and the teeth
of it be small and straight, and betwene the great teeth and
the small in a large field or space, there is graven manie an
Image, subtille made, and cunninglie enamelled about with
fine gold: the field is checked with Sables and Silver, and
enamelled with Cybor and Azure: and therein is contained
the story how Venus, Juno, Pallas, struge for the golden
Ball in the mountaine Ida, and how it was put to Paris, to
give it to the fairest of them.

Paris at that time was a Shepherd, and kept his Flockes
with

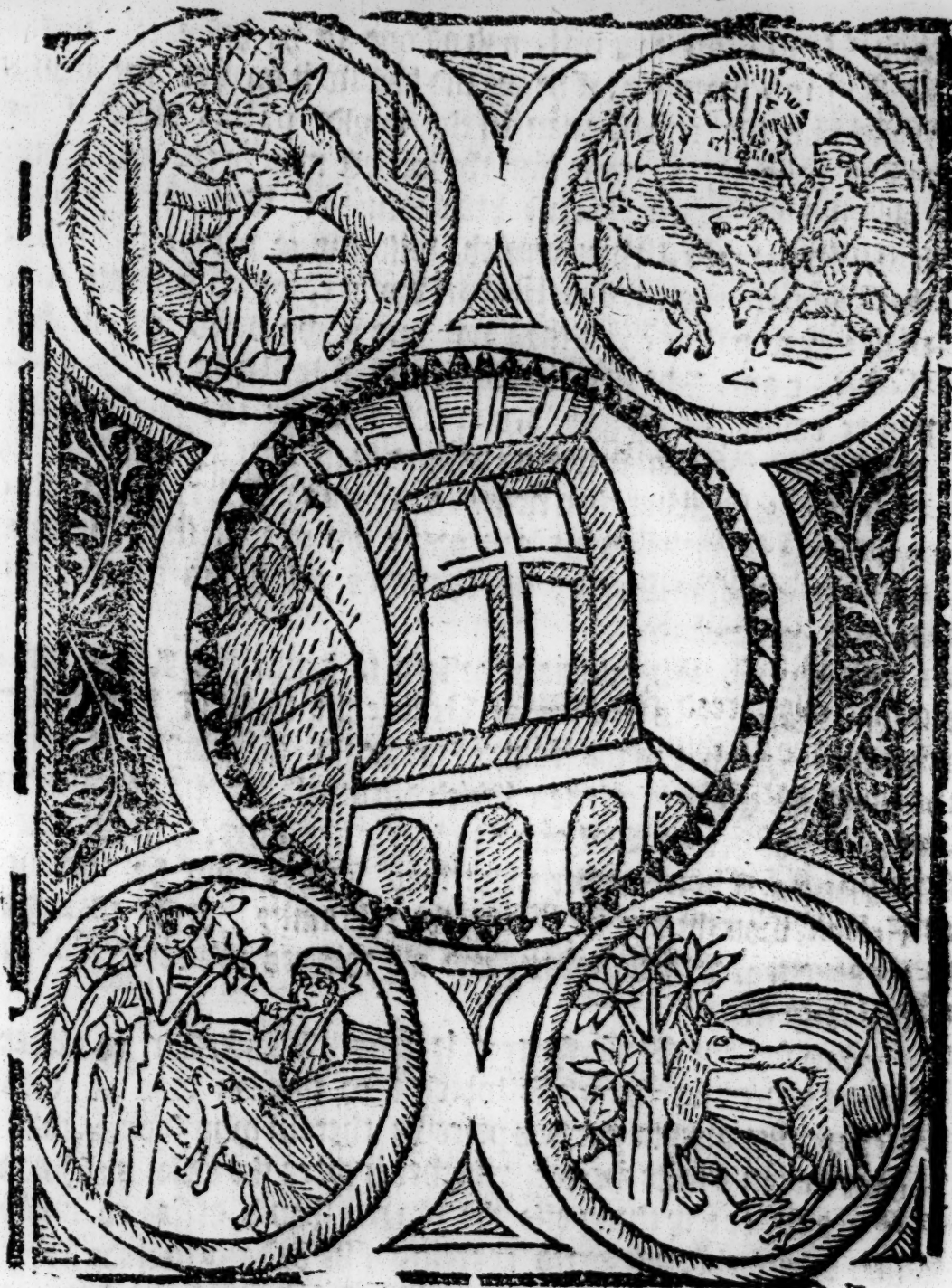
of Reynard the Fox:

With Oenon on that hill, and as soon as he had receiv'd the Ball, Juno promis'd, if he would bestow it on her she would make him the richest man in the world. pallas said, if she might have it, to make him the wisest man in the world, and the most fortunate against his enemies: But then Venus said, What need'st thou wealth, wisdom or valour? art thou not priamus sonne and Hectors brother, which have all Asia under their power? Art thou not one of the heirs of mighty Troy? come give me the Ball, and I will give thee the greatest treasure of the world, and that shall be the fairest Lady breathing, she whose like no Sunne shall ever againe behold, so shalt thou be richer then riches, and climb above all in glory: that's the wealth none can praise too much, since beauty is that heavenly Elixir, which turnes all things in man to joy and contentment.

When Paris heard this he desired to know the Lady, and Venus said, It is Hellen of Greece, the wife of King Menelaus, she that is the Jeme of the world, the treasure of beauty, and the glory of all eyes which did behold her: then presently Paris gave her the Ball, and confirm'd her fairer then the other Goddesses. Then another place was figured how he wonne Hellen, brought her to Troy, the solemnity at the marriage the honour at the triumphes, and all things else contain'd in that large story.

Now for the Glasse: Perce, it was not inferiour to either of the other: for the glasse which stood thereon was of such vertue, that men might see & perceiue therein whatsoever, was done within a mile thereof, whether it were the actions of men or beasts, or any thing else the owner should desire to know and whatsoever but gazed therein, if he had any malady whatsoever, it was presently cured. So great were the vertues of this rare Glasse, that wonder not if I shed teares to thinke of the losse: for the wood in which this Glasse stood was sight and fast, and is called Oatine, it will last ever: for noymes dust, wet nor time can consume it, and therefore King Salomon sealed his Temple with the same: the value exceeded far the value of gold, it is like to the wood Hebenus, of which King Crampart

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Crampart made a Horse, for the love of the most beautifull daughter of King Morcadiges. This horse was made with such Art within, that whosoever rode on it, if hee pleased, hee would runne aboue an hundred miles in lesse then an houre, which was approued by Clamades the Kings sonne, who not belieuing in the Engine, and being young and lusty, leapt upon the

of Renard the Fox.

the Horse and presently Crampart turning a plume that stood in the breast of the Engine, moved, and went out of the Palace through the windows, and in the first minute he was gone at least ten mile, Clamades was much affrighted at the wonder and imagined (as the story said) that he should never have returned backe againe: but of his long journey, much feare, great trouble, and infinite joy, when he had learned to manage and governe the wooden beast. I leate to speake for tediousnesse sake, onely the high hermit of all issued from the wood.

Of this wood the Glasse case was made, being larger then the Glasse by halfe a foot and more square, upon which verge was decyphred divers manie strange Histories, in Gold, in Silver, in Sables, Pellets, Azure and Cynope: and these coloures were very curiously wrought and interlaid together, and under each History the words so ingraven and inameled, that any man might read the whole Story: helpe it, the world never produc'd a thing of greater beauty, lustre, or pleasure. In the upper part thereof stood a Horse in his naturall glory, fat faire, and fiery, which braved a statelie Hart which ranne before him: but seeing he could not overtake the Hart in swiftnesse, at which he infinitely disdained, he went to a Herdsman standing by, and told him, if he would helpe him to take a Hart which he would shew him, he should have all the profit of the conquest, as the hories, skinne and flesh: Then the Herdsman asked him what meanes he should use to get him: the Horse said, mount upon my backe, and I will beare thee after him, till with tryngs we take him. The herdsman took his offer and bestriding the Horse followed the deare: but he fled away so fast, and got so much ground of the Horse, that with much labour the Horse grew weary, and hee hidde the Herdsman a light, for he would rest himselfe a while: But the Herdsman said: I have a bridle on thy head, and spurs on my heels, therefore knowe thou art now my servant; neither will I part with thee, but governe thee as seemes best to my pleasure. Thus the Horse brought himselfe into thraldome, and was taken in his owne net, for no creature

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hath a greater adversary then his owne enmy, and many
whiche labour the hurt of others, shall fall upon their owne
ruines.

In another part was figured an Asse, and an Hound, which
were both the servants of a rich man: This man loved his
Hound exceedingly, and would oft play with him, and suffer
the dogge to fayne and leape upon him, and now and then to
lick him about the mouth. Now when Bauldwin the Asse
saw this, he began to envie the Hound, and said, What sees
my Master in this foule Hound, that he suffers him thus to
leape upon him and kisse him? I see no profitable service he
do him. I labour, beare and drinke, and doe more service in
one weeke then the dogge and his whole kinde are able to do
in a yere, and yet have I not the tyme of his labours: for he
litteth by his trencher, eats the fat of his meat, and lies
on Carpets and Pillows: when I that doe all am fed only
with Nettles and Thistles: well, I will no longer endure it
but I will study to have my Lords favour as much as the
Hound, if not in greater measure. Anon the Master of the
house came home, and the Asse lifting up his taile, leapt with
his fore-feet on his shoulders, and brated and grined and
put forth his mouth to kisse him, and used such rude unman-
nerly action, that he rub'd all the skynne from his Masters
eare, and almost overthrow him: so that the man was forced
to cry out helpe, helpe, for this Asse will kill me. Then came in
his servants with staves, and beat the Asse so exceedingly that
he was almost slaine: which done, he returned to his stall a-
gaine, and was an Asse as he was before. In the same man-
ner, they which doe envie and spite at others welfare, if they
receiue the same reward, it is nothing more then is due to
their merit: for an Asse is an Asse and was borne to eat
Thistles: and where Asses governe, there order is never ob-
served, for they have no eye either on this side, or beyond
their owne private profit yet sometimes they are advanced
the more is the pittie.

In another part was figured the Story, how my Father
Tybert the Cat travailed together, and had swoone by their
tray

of Reynard the Fox.

troth, that neither for loue nor hate they would depart one from the other: but it hapned on a time they sawe Hunters comming ower the fields with a keunell of Hounds, from towhich they fled space, for their liues were in danger. Then said the Fox, Tybert whither shall we flie, for the Hunters haue espied us: for mine stonier part I haue a thousand willes to escape them, and as long as we abide together we shall not neede to feare them. But the Cat began to sigh, and was exceedinglie afraide, and said, Reynard, what needes manie wordes I haue but one wile, and that must helpe me, and forthwith hee clambered up to the top of an high Tree, where he lurkt amongst the leaues, that neither Huntsman nor Hound could hurt him, and left my Father to abide the whole hazard of the whole keunell pursued him hoznes and hallowes echoing after him: Kill the Fox, Kill the Fox.

This when Tibert sawe, he mocked my Father, and said: Nowe cousin Reynard, it is time to let loose all your willes, for if your wit faile you, I feare your whole body will perish. This my Father hearing from him he most trusted, and being then in the height of pursuit wearied, and almost spent, he let his male slip from his shoulders, to make himselfe so much lighter, yet all abated not, for the Hounds were so swift they had caught him, had he not by chance espied a hole, into towhich he entered, and escaped the Hounds and Huntmen. Thus you may see the false faith of the Cat, whose like there be many liuing at this time, and though this might well excuse me from loving the Cat, yet my soules health and charitie bindes me to the contrarie, and I wish him no hurt, though his misfortune shall neber be grieuous to me: not so much for hatred as the remembrance of his injuri's towhich often contends against my reason.

Also in that Apptoz stands an other History of the Wolfe how on a time hee found upon a Heath a dead Horse, whose flesh being eaten away, he was faine to gnaw and deboure the bones, towhich he did with such greedyn's that swallowing them too hastily done, one fell so crosse his throat, that hee was almost choak'd, and hardly escaped with life: whereupon

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besought every place for the cunningest Surgeons, promising them the great gifts to ease his torment: but having lost much labour, in the end he met with the Crane, and besought him with his long neck and bill to helpe him, and he would highly reward him. The Crane greedy of gain, put in his head into the wolfe's throat, and brought out the bone. The wolfe started at the pull, and cried aloud, thou hurtst mee, but I do for thee this: yet doe it not againe I charge thee, for at anothers hands I would not beare it: then the Crane said, Sir Ilegim, goe and be frolick, for you are whole, I looke for no more but the reward you promised mee; How (said the wolfe) what impudence is this? I suffer and have cause to complaine, yet he will be rewarded, he will not so much as thanke me for his life, but forgets that his head was in my mouth, and how I suffered him to draw it out againe without hurting, albeit he put me to exceeding much paine: I suppose it is I which deserve the reward, and not the Crane.

Thus you may see the fashion of ungratefull men in these daies, whether they reward good with evil: for whereas pride is exalted, there honour is ever laid in the dust. There be a world which ought to reward, and do good to those that have advanced them, which now complaine, and make those advancements injuries, but the guerdon will follow: for it is the wisest counsaile, that whosoever will goe about to chastise another, should ever be sure of his owne clearenesse: All this, and a world more then I can well remember, was curiously brought on this Glasse: for the work-master thereof was the cunningest and profoundest Clarke in all Sciences that ever breathed. And because the Jewels were too good and precious for me to keepe: therefore I sent them to the King and Quenes Majestie, as a present to witness my faith and service: And he that had seen what sorrows my children made when I sent the Glasse away, would have wondered, for by reason of the great beuities therein, they oft gazed in the same, both to behold the Jewels, and to see how their cloathing and apparell became them.

of Reynard the Fox.

Little did I then imagine that good Kayward was so nere his death, for then but himselfe, and Billine the Kamm, I knew no messengers worthy to carry so rich a present. But I will search the whole world, but I will finde the murderer, for murder cannot be hid. It may be he is in this presence which knowes what is become of Kayward, albe we do conceale it; for many Devils walke like Saints. Yet the greatest wonder of all is (which troubled me most,) that my Lord the King should say, that my Father nor my selfe euer did good. But the troubles of affaires may well breed forgetfulness in things, otherwise your Majesty might call to minde howe when the King your Father liued, and you were a Prince not aboue two yeares old; My Father came from the Schoole at Mountpelier, where he had studied fife yeares the Art of Physick, and was expert in all the principles thereof, and so famous in those daies, that he wore clothes of Silke and a Golden Girdle. Howe when he was come to the Court, he found the King in great extremity of sickness, (which was no little griefe unto him, for he loved the King most dearly) and the King rejoyced at his sight, and would not suffer him to be out of his presence. All others might walke together they would, onely he must euer be nere him. Then said your Father, Reynard, I am exceeding sicke, and I feele my sickness increasing. My Father answered, My Lord, here is an Urinall, make water therein, and as soon as I behold your state, I will giue mine opinion. The King did as he was admitted (for he trusted not any equall with him). Then said my Father: My best Lord, if you will be eased of your griefe, you must needs eate the Liver of a Wolfe of seven yeares old, or else your disease is incurable.

The Wolfe at that time stood by your Father, but said nothing: whereupon the King said, Sir Isegrim, you heare howe there is nothing which can cure mee but your Lyver. The Wolfe replied: not so my Lord, for I am not yet full fife yeares old. It is no matter (answered my Father) let him be opened, and when I see the Lyver, I will tell you if it be medecinable: Then was the Wolfe carried to the Bit-

The pleasant History

chin and his Likez taken out, which the King eat, and was presently cured of his sickness. When the King thanked my Father, and commanded all his Subjects on paine of death, from thence forth to call him Master Reynard, So he abode still about the King, walked by his side, and was trusted in all things, and the King gave him (for an honour) a Garland of Roses which he must ever weare upon his head. But these remembrances are all lost and gone, and his enemies are not onely advanced, vertue is put backe, and Innocence lies in sorrow: for when basenes and covetousnesse are made Commanders, they neither know themselves, nor looke at the lowmes from whence they are risen: They have no hearts for pity, nor cares for the poore mans cause, Gold is goale they runne to, and gife the God which they worship. What great mans Gate doth not now locke up Covetousnesse? where is not flattery entertain'd and what Prince takes hate at his owne p'sises? But should greatnes need their honest service, well might they stand ere they could gaine that imployment For like Wolves they had rather see their Masters dye then lend them the least part of their Liboz.

This my Lord was an accident which fell in your youth, and you may well forget it: Yet (without boasting) I my selfe may say, I have done to you both honour and service, and you haplie also forget this which I shall repeat, which I bold I doe not t) upbraid your Majestie, for you are worthe of more then I can tender, and my uttermost is but the rent of a loyall Subject, which am ever bound by the lawes of God and Nature to performe.

So it was, that on a time I Isegrim the Wolfe and I had gotten a swine under us, and by reason of his extream loud crying, we were compelled to bite him to death. At which time your selfe came out of a Grove unto us, and saluted us friendlie, saying: What you and the Queene your wife which came after you, were both exceeding hungrie, and intreated us to gibe you part of our getting: Isegrim then whispered in such manner, that none could understand him, but I spake out aloud: With all my heart my Lord, and were it better then

of Reynard the Fox:

it is, it were too meane for your service. But Isegrim according to his wont departed grumbling, and took half of the Swine, giving you and the Queene but one poore quarter, the other he himselfe unmannerly deuoured, and left me for my share but poore half of the Liniges. When your Maiesty had eaten your tart, you were still hungry, but the Wolfe would deliber none: so that you reacht him a blow with your foot, which toze all the skin from about his eares, so that he ranne away crying and howling with all extremitie. But your Maiesty commanded him to returne againe speedily and bring you more meat, but he went away grumbling. Then I besought your Maiesty, that I might goe with him: and I well remember your answer. So away we went together, his eares dropping blood all the way as he went: In the end we took a Calf, and when your Maiesty saw us bring it, you laughed and said to me. I was a swift Huntsman, and could finde demy game quickly, and therefore I was fit to serue in time of necessity: Then you bad me to diuide it, and I did it and gave one half thereof to your Maiesty, the other half to the Queene: As for the Puggets, Liber, Lungs and all the inwards, I sent them to the young Princes your Children: As for the head, I gave it to Isegrim the Wolfe, and took unto my selfe but the feet onelie. Then said your Maiesty, ha Reynard, who taught you to make these courteous deuotions My Lord (answered I) that did this Priest which sits here with the bloodie pate for he lost his salme for his too much inequality, and for covetousnesse hath reapt nothing but shame and dishonour. But it matters not, for there be many Wolfes in these dales, that would euen eat up their best friends and kindred: Nay if they had power, then your Maiesty also, for they make no respect either of friend or enemy. But voe to that common wealth where such have the upper hand and government.

My gracious Lord, this and many such like actions as this have I done for your Maiesty, which were it not for tediousnes sake I could well repeat. But they are all now cast out of your remembrance, but time and my loyalty I hope will
ou-

The peasant History

One day again he call them. I have seen the day when no matter was finished in the Court without my advice and censure, though now that Judgement is not so reputed: yet it may be, the same reputation may spring up againe, and be belabred as firmly as before, as long as it swerbes not from Justice, which is the onely thing I aime at. For if any one can charge me otherwise, and prove it by witness, here I stand to endure the utmost the Law can inflict upon mee: But if malice onely slander me without witness, I crave the combat according to the Law and Iustice of the Court. Then said the King, Reynard you say well, nor knowe I any thing more of Kywards death then the bringing of his head unto mee by Bellin the Kermine; therefore of it I here acquit you. My deare Lord (said the Fox) I humbly thanke you: yet his death so grievous unto mee I cannot let it passe so easely: I remember my heart was heaby at their departure, and I was ready to sinke to the ground, which was a certaine presage of the losse which happened.

These words, and the sad looks of the Fox, so amazed all the behoulders, that they could not chuse but believe all that he uttered, so that every one bemoan'd his losse, and pitied his sorrow. But the King and Queene were most touched with the same, and then intreated him that he would make diligent search for the finding of them out, for his praises had quicken them farre in love with the Jewels: And because he told them, he had sent those Jewels unto them (though they never saw them) yet they gave him as great thanks, as if they had bin in their safe possession, and desired him he would be a meanes they might be restored to them againe.

of Reynard the Fox

CHAP. 22.

How Reynard made his peace with the King, and how Isengrim the Wolfe complained of him againe

The Fox understood their meaning exceeding well, and though he little meant to performe what they intreated



The Pleasant History

yet he thanked the King and Queene for the comforts they gave him in his great extremity, holding not to rest, neither night nor day. but to search all the corners of the earth till he had found what was become of those Jewels: also entreating his Majestie, that if they should be concealed in such places, where he might be withstood by force, so as neither his prayers nor power might attaine unto them, that then his Highnesse would assist him: both because it was an occasion which concerned him nearly, as also a thing required from his Office, being an Act of perfect Justice, to punish theft and murder, both which were contained in this action.

When the King answered him, that so soon as it should be known where they were, no helpe or assistance should be wanting. The King gave the King humble thanks, for now he had gotten all his purposes to the wished end he expected, and by his false tale and flattery, had so fastened the King unto him, that now he might goe freely whither he pleased, and none should dare to complaine upon him: onely Isegrim his wife stood all this while infinitely displeased, and not able to contain his anger any longer; he said, O my Lord the King, is it possible your Majestie should be so much childish or weak of heliefe, as to fix your trust upon the falshood of this ever-deceiving merchant, which hath nothing but shadows and Chymera's wherewith to inchant you? O be not so easily seduced, he is a wretch all covered and besmeared with murder and treason, and even to your own face hath made a scabb of your Majestie. For my own part I am glad he is here in your presence, and I intend to ring him such a peale of contrary nature, that all the lies he can invent shall not baffle him any longer.

So it is (my dread Lord) that this dissembling and false Traitor not long since did betray my wife most shamefully: for it happened upon a Winters day, that they two travelled together thro' a very great water, and he perswaded my wife that he would teach her a singular Art how to catch fish with her selfe, by letting it hang angle wise in the water a

of Reynard the Fox:

Long while : before unto be said, there would so much fish in
family clabe, that halfe a dozen of them should not be able to



behour it. The silly foole my tolke (supposing all to be truth
which came from him) went presently into the mire up to
the belly before he came to the water, and coming into the
depth

The pleasant History

Depth of the water (as he directed her) she held her taylor down
still in the water, expecting when there the fish should cleave
to: but the weather being sharpe and frosty and) she stood
there so long, that her taylor was frozen hard to the Ice, so that
all the force she had was not able to pull it out: but when
this lustfull villaine beheld that, he presently leapt upon her
and rabished her, in such beastly and shamefull manner, that
no modest eare is able to heare the odiousnesse of the action.
My poore wife being disarmed of all resistance, well might she
shinke, cry and fade upon the bzine of her owne teares, but
all to no purpose, the deed was done, and the villaine tri-
umphed. This no impudence can make him deny, for I came
and took him in the action. O how much Iestousie, griefe,
and fury assail'd me at that instant, I was then distracted to
behold them: and cryed, Reynard, villaine what art thou do-
ing: but he seeing me so nere approaching, presently leapt
from her and ranne his way, So I went unto her with much
sorrow and heavinesse, having a world of labour ere I could
breake the Ice about her: and in despite of all my cunning, yet
she was compeld to leaue a pice of her taile behind her: and
indeed, we both escaped hardly with our liues. For by reason
of the great anguish she endured, she barked so loud, that the
people of the next villiage rose up and came with staves and
bills, with flails, and pitchforkes, and the wiues with
there distafes, and so fiercely assaulted us: crying, Kill, Kill,
and slay, slay, that I was neber in so desperat a taking. One
knight among the rest, which was strong and skilful of foot,
hurt us sore with a Pike staffe and had not the night be-
friended us, we had neber escaped that danger. From hence
we came into a field full of bryars and brambles, where
we hid us from the fury of our enemies. Thus my Gracious
Lord, you have heard how this Wraitor and murtherer hath
used us, and against the same we crave the right of your Law
and Justice.

But Reynard answered and said, If this were true, I con-
fesse it would touch me nere in honour and reputation: but
God forbid that ever such a slander should be proved against
me,

of Reynard the Fox:

me: I confesse I taught her to catch fish, and taught her how to enter the water, and never touch the mire: but her greediness so transported her when she heard me name the fish, that she ranne without respect of any path or direction, and so coming into the Ice, she was there presently frozen by reason of her so long tarrying, for she had more fish then would have satisfied twentie reasonable appetites: but it is commonly sene, that who all would have all forgoe: for covetousness seldom brings any thing well home: yet when I saw her so fastned in the Ice, I used all my best endeavours to loosen her, and so indeed was heaving and sheaving about her but to little purpose, for by reason of her weight I was not able to move her.

Now when this was in doing, came Hecgrim, and seeing me so busie about her, Churle like he most blisely flattered me, like a profuse flatterer which takes delight to be accounted a Cuckold: but believe it, my gracious Lord, all was false, and his wife virtuous, for any thing within my knowledge: whence I am perswaded, that surely his eye dazzled, for indeed he uttered many a grisious curse, and threatened much revenge against me, so that more to eschew his blasphemy then fury, I went my way and he came, and with as great ado, and as much heave and shove he helpt her out: which done, (they then almost starved with cold) ranne and swept up and downe the fields to get them heat: and that this is all truth which I have spoken, I will willingly be deposed for I would not be the father of any falsehood before your Majesty, to be Master of many millions: how eber my fortunes goe, I asperse not, truth is my badge, and hath ever bene the Ensigne of all my Ancesters: and if there bee any scruple or doubt made of mine assertion, I aske but eight dayes liberty, that I may conferre with my learned Counsell, and I will to approve all my words by the oath and testimony of good and sufficient witnesses, that your Majesty and your honourable Counsell shall accord to the justnesse of my protestation. As for the Wolfe, what have I to doe with him? it is well known already that he is a debauch and almost nota-

The Morall.

By the complaint of the Wolfe, is shewed the envy that one ill man beares another, & how loath they are that any of their contrary faction should scape punishment and that to gaine revengement they care not what indignity they doe to themselves, as doth appere by the Wolves flandering his owne wife.

By the rising of the Towne up against the Wolfe and his wife is shewed that one mischief seldom cometh to all folkes, but another shall followe it at the heels.

By the Foxes excuse, is shewed, how policy hath ever an evasion or a cloake for any evil it doth see

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can colour eve
ry thing with a
presence of
goodneſſe

The Foxes
contempt of
the Wolfe,
ſhewes that
the ſtrength
or policy con-
ſiſts in diſgra-
cing the ad-
verſe part and
calling his
good name in
queſtion, by
which meanes
he may loſe his
life and credit.

By the ſhee
Wolfeſ falling
into the well

ricious tillaine, falſe both to beſteem and to your ſafety, and
made his owne worſhip himſelfe him a baſe ſlanderer of wo-
men: therefore I referre my ſelfe to the triall of his wiſe: if
ſhe accuſe me, let the law hold me guilty, provided ſhe may
be made free from her husband, whoſe ryming will compell
her to ſay any thing, though never ſo unjuſtly.

At this, forth ſtept dame Ariewind the Wolfes wife, and
ſaid: O Reynard, thou haſt ſo open a ſmooth tongue, and ſo
deipt in flattery, that no man is ſafe from thine enchantment:
it is not once but oft thou haſt deceived me, remember but
how thou didſt uſe me at the well with the buchers: which
hanging at one end, and running thereto one puller, which
ether as one went downe, the other went up: I remember
how thou getting into one of them, fel'ſt downe to the botto-
me of the well, and there ſateſt in great danger and perill, ſo that
I ran thither with great haſte, and heard the ſigh and make
great moane, then asking thee how thou cameſt there, and thou
anſweredſt me, that thou waſt there a fiſhing, and haſt ſo



of Reynard the Fox.

much fish, of which thou hast eaten so many, that thy belly was ready to breake with swelling: then I asked how I might come to the, and thou saidst, Hunt leap into that bucket which hangeth there, and thou wilt be presently with me: which I no sooner did, but (being much heavier then thy selfe) I fell presently to the bottom of the well, and thou cam'st up to the top: at which when I seemed to be angry, thou said'st, Hunt, this is but the fashion of the world: ever as one comes up, another must goe downe, and so said, you leapt out of the Bucket and ranne your way, leaving me there all alone, where I remained a whole day, pined with hunger, and starved with cold; and ere I could get out from thence, receiving so many blowes, that my life was never in greater danger. The Fox replied: Hunt, though the strokes were painfull unto you, yet I had rather you should have them then my selfe, for you are stronger and better able to beare them, and at that time of necessity, one of us could not escape them: besides Hunt, I taught you wisdom and experience, that you should not trust either friend or foe, when the matter he perswades to, is the abiding of his own perill: for nature teacheth us to love our owne welfare, and he which doth otherwise, is craboned with nothing but the title of folly.

Then said dame Arsewind to the King: I beseech your Majestie make hoto this dissembler can blow with all winds, and paint his mischiefs with false colours: a world of times hath he brought me into these hazards. Once he betray'd me to my Hunt the she Ape, where ere I escaped, I was faine to leave one of mine eares behinde me: if the Fox dare tell the truth of the story (for I know his memory to be much better: besides he is apt to catch advantage from the weaknesse of language) I desire no better evidence against him. Then said the Fox, willingly I will doe it, and without flattery or falsehood, and therefore I beseech your Majestie lend me your Majesties patience.

Upon a certaine time the Wolfe here came to me into the wood, and complained unto me that he was exceeding hun-

shewes the effect of covetousnesse, which never brings any thing home but losse and danger, and that policy cares not who pines, so he feeles no pain, as appeares by the Foxes tempting her into the Bucket.

By their entering into the she Apes Cave is shewed the difference betwixt temperance & rashnesse, and how farre good words will prevaile before rude and churlish behaviour.

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grp, (yet never saw him fuller in my life) but he would ever
dismble: at which presently I took pity of him and said
I was also as hungry as he: so away he went and travelled
half a day together without finding any thing, then began he
to whine and crie, and said, he was able to go no further.
Then hard by the foot of a Hawthorne Tree, we espied a hole
all covered over with Brambles, and heard a great rushing
therein, but could not imagin the cause why: then I desired
the Wolfe to goe in and looke if any thing were there to profit
us, (for some thing I know there was) then said he, Cousin, I
would not creepe into the hole for a hundred pounds, till I
knew certainly what was therein, for there may be danger:
but if you please to attempt it, who I know hath both Art and
wit to save your selfe, I will stay here under this Tree till
your returne: but I beseech you make hast and let me know
what is therein as soone as you perceiue it.

Behold, my dread Lord the King, thus he hath made me poore
silly brast to goe before into the hazard, and he who is great,
strong and mighty, did abide without in peace, wherein I ex-
pect no little friendship, for I would not endure the like dan-
ger for a Kingdome: but to procede, I entred into the hole,
and found the way darke, long and tedious: in the end I espied
a great light, which came in on the further side of the hole,
by which I saw there lying a great she Ape, with eyes glim-
mering and sparkling with fire, her mouth set round with
long sharpe teeth, and on her hands and nallies sharpe as an
Elm, or Bodkin. I imagined her at first a Marmazine, or Ba-
boone, or else a Mercat, for a more dreadful beast I never be-
held in all my life time, and by her side lay others of her chil-
dren, which like her selfe were sterne and cruell of counte-
nance: when they saw me come towards them, they gaped
wilde with their mouths upon me, so that I grew amazed,
and wish'd my selfe farre from the harbor, But resolving
with my selfe, that now I was in, I must quit my selfe as
best as I could, I looked more constantly upon her, and mee
thought she appeared bigger then Ifegrim the Wolfe, and the
least of her brats, much larger then my selfe (for a fouler
company

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company I neber saw) they were all lated in foule litter, rotten and surte with their stone piss, they were all daubed and clogged with their stone dung, which stunk so filthy that I was almost poisoned with the smell. For my stone part I durst not but speak them faire, and therefore I said, Aunt, God gibe you many good dates, and blesse you and my Cousins, your prettie children: questioulesse they are the fairest of their ages that eber I beheld, and so surpass in beaultie and perfection, that they may well be accounted of most Princelie issue. Truly Aunt, we are infinitely behouden to you that doth adde this increase and glorie to your familie. For mine own part (de Aunt) when I heard you were laid downe and delibered, I could not say but needs must come to visite you: Then replied she, Cousin Reynard, you are exceeding welcome: you have found me like a slut, but I thanke you for your kind visitation: you are a worthy Gentleman, and (thorow the Kings Dominions) for your wit and judgement, held of singuler reputation, you do much honour to our kindred, and are famous for the meanes you tooke to their preferment: I must intreat you to take the charge of my children, and instruct them in the rules of knowlege and science, that they may know hereafter how to live in the world. I have thought of you eber since they were borne, and resolved upon this, Cousin, because I knew your perfection, and that you accompanied your self with none but the good and the vertuous.

Whow glad was I, when I heard those words to proceed from her, which kindnesse was onelie, because at first I called her Aunt, who indeed was no soule kin unto me: for my true Aunt indeed is onely Dame Rukewaw which standeth ponder: who indeed is mother of exelent children. Yet notwithstanding I answered this rouse monster. Aunt my life and goods are both at your service, and what I can do for you night or day shall eber be at your commandement and your children. Yet I most heartily wisht my selfe farre from them at that instant, for I was almost poisoned with their stinke. And I pittied Isegrim who was sore griped with
hunger

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hunger all this while : and offering to take my leaue, and faining that my wife will thinke it long till my returne, shee said, Deare Cousin, you shall not depart till you haue eaten something, I shall take it unkindly if you offer it, then rose shee up, and carried me into an inner Rooke, where was great store of all kind of Venison, both the Red Deere, fallow Deere, and Roe : and great store of Partridge, Pheasant, and other Fowles, that I amazed much from whence such store of Meate should come. Now when I had eaten sufficiently, shee gave me a side and halfe a haunch of a Hind, to carry home to my wife, which I was ashamed to take, but that she compelled me : and so taking my leaue, and being recreated often to visite her, I did depart thence, much ioyed that I had spent so well.

Now being come out of the Causey, I spied wheres as Isegrim lay groaning pittifully, and I asked him how he fared : he said, wondrous ill, and so extreemly ill, that (dear Nephew) without some meat I die presently : then did I take compassion on him, and gave him my wifes Token which preserved his life, and for which then hee gave me a world of thanks, though now he hate me extreemly. But as soon as he had deuoured up my Venison, he said, Reynard, my deare Cousin, what found you in the hole : belibe it I am now more hungry then I was before, and this small morsel hath but sharpened my teeth to eat more. When said I to him, Uncle, get you into that hole, and you shall finde store of victuals, for there lyeth my Aunt with her children : if you can flatter and speake her fair, you need fear no hard measure, all things will be as you would wish it.

I thinke (my Gracious Lord) this was warning sufficient, and that which might haue armed any wise Spirit, but rude and barbarous Beasts will neuer understand wisdom. And therefore they loath the Policies they know not. But yet hee promised to follow my counsell : so forth he went into that foule stinking hole, and found the Ape in that filthy sort as before I described : which when he saw, (being affrighted) he cried out, Woe and alas, I thinke I am come into hell : did
euer

of Reynard the Fox.

ever creature see such fearfull goblins? Drowne them, for shame drowne them, they are so uglye, they are able to scare the Devil, why they made my haire stand an end with their horrid deformitie. Then (said she) Sir Isgrim, their creation is not my fault, let it suffice, they are my Childzen; and I am their Mother. For ought their beautie or hard labour to displease you: here was a kinsman of theirs today, and is but newly departed, who is well known to exceed you both in birth virtue and wisdom, and he accounted them faire and lobely, for your opinion I care not: therefore you may depart at your pleasure. Then he reply'd (Dame) I would have you know, that I would eat of your meat, it is much better bestowed one mee, then on these uglye Warchins. But she told him, she had no meat: Yes (said he) here is meat enough, and with that, offering to reach at the meat, my Aunt start up with her childzen, and ran at him with their sharp nailes, and so clawed him, that the blood ran about his eares, and I heard crie and howle so extreamly, that it appeared he had no defence, but to run out of the hole, as fast as he could. For indeed he came out both extreamly beaten, and extreamly bitten, and all his skin flast like a Spanish Jerkin: and one year left behind as a pake of his manners.

This when I saw, I asked him if he had flattered sufficiently: and he said he had spoken as he found, for the Damme was a foule Bitch, and the Litter most ugly monstres. Then I told him, how he should have commended their beauties, and take them for his best of alliance. And he replied he had rather have seen them all hang'd. Then (quoth I) you must alwaies receive such reward as now you do, but wisdom would do otherwile, a lie is sometimes as much availeth, as a true tale: and faire word never come out of season, and better then we, hold it for a rule woorthy Imitation.

Thus my Lord, I have told you truly how he came by his red night cap, which I know he cannot, nor dare to deny, for all is true without any addition.

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CHAP. 23.

How *Isegrim* Proffered his Glove to *Reynard* to fight with him which *Reynard* accepted, and how *Ruken* advised the Fox how to carry himself in the fight.

The Wolfe answered the Fox: I may well forbear (false billaine as thou art) thy mocks and scornes, but thine injuries I will not. Thou say, I was almost dead for hunger, when thou helpt me in my need: but thou liest falsely therein, for it was nothing but a Ware bone thou gapest me, when thou hadst gnawed all the meat thereof: and therefore know in this thou injurest my reputation, againe thou accusest me of treason against the King, and to conspire his Majesties death, for certaine treasure thou saiest is in Husterloe: also thou hast abused and slandered my wiffe, which will ever be an infamie to her name, if it be not revenged: these things considered, I have forborne you long, therefore now look not to escape, wherefore seeing there is no other testimonie but our owne consciences: here before you my Lord the King and the rest of my Noble Lords, friendes and alliances: here I affirme and will approve to the last drop of my blood, that thou Reynard the Fox art a false Traitor and a murderer, and this I will approve and make good upon thy bodie within the Lists of the field, bodie against bodie, by which meanes our strife shall have an end and in witness whereof I cast thee here my Glove, which I dare thee to take up, that I may have right for mine injuries; or else die like a Recreant.

Reynard was something perplexed when he saw this, for he knew himselfe much too weak for the Wolfe, and feared to come by the worst: but straight rememb'ring the advantage he had, by reason the Wolfes fore-clawes were pulled away and that they were not yet fully cured. he said, whatsoever be he that faith I am a Traitor or a murderer I say he lieth in his throat, especially *Isegrim* above all others: poor foxe, thou bringest me to the place I desire, and to the purpose I wish for, in signe whereof I take up the gage, and throw down mine, to approve all thy words lies and falsehoods.

This

of Reynard the Fox.



This said the King receiued their pledges, and admitted
the battell, commanding them to put in their sureties, that
the next morrow they should trie the combat: then stept forth
the Bear, and the Cat, and were sureties for the Wolfe: and
for the Fox were sureties Grimbard the Hecok and Bytelus.

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The Morall.

By the Wolves
challenging
the Combat of
the Fox, is
shewed the
madnesse of
rage & fury, &
how negligent
it is in respec-
ting its own
hazard, so it
may do mis-
chiefe to the
adversary.
The Foxes
accepting of it
shewes how
when policy
hath no other
shifting hole,

When all ceremonies were finished, the Ape tooke Reynard aside and said, *Prophete*, I beseech you take care of your selfe in this battell, be bold and wise, your *Auncle* taught me once a prayer of singular vertue, for him which was to fight: and he learned it of that excellent Scholler and Clerke, the Abbot of Budelo, and he that hath his prayer with a good deboration fast'n'd, shall neuer be overcome in combat, and therefore my best *Prophete* be not afraid, for to morrow I will read it over to you, and the Wolfe shall neuer prevaile against you. The Fox gave her many thanks for her labours, and told her his quarrell was good and honest, and therefore he had no doubt of happy success: so all that night he rested with his kinsfolkes about him, who were aboy the time with pleasant discourse. But Dame Rukew his Aunt, still beat her brayne how to worke him advantage in the combat, wherefore she caused all his haire to be shaven of even from his head to the taile, and then she anointed all his body quite over with oyle Olive, so that she made it so smooth and slippery, that the

Wolfe

of Reynard the Fox:

Wolfe could catch no hold of him: besides hee was round, fat, and plump of body, which much abated to his advantage: when shee advised him that night to drinke exceeding much, that he might be more apt to pisse in the morning, but in no wise to shed any till he come into the field: then (said she) when you are in the fight, and see time fitting, pisse upon your bushy tail, and strike it in the Wolfes face, and as near as you can into his eyes, by which meanes blinding his sight, hee shall be little able to offend you: and but at these especiall times keepe your taile as close as can bee between your legges, least hee catch hold thereon, and pull you to the ground: also take carefully to your selfe at the first, and by all meanes shun his blowes, making him to tople and runne after, especially there where most dust is, and spring it up with your feet, make it flie in his eyes, take your advantage, and smite and bite him, where you may doe him most mischief, eber and anon striking him on the face with your taile full of pisse, and that will take from him both sight and understanding: besides, it will so tire and wearie him, that his feet not being fully cured of their hurt by the losse of his shoes, (which you caused to bee pulled off) he will not be able to persue you: for though he bee great, yet his heart is little and weak. This (Prophete) is mine advice, and assure your selfe in these cases, Art prebatter as much as courage: therefore regard your selfe well, that not onely your selfe, but your whole familie may gain honour and reputation from your fortune: as for the charme of pater which your Uncle Martin taught me, by which you may be invincible, it is this which followeth, then laying her hand upon his head, she said, Blaerd, Shay, Alphenio, Rasbue, Gorfons, Aisbuitrio. Now Prophete, assure your selfe you are free from all mischief or danger whatsoever, therefore go to your rest, for it is near daie, and some sleep will make the bodie better disposed.

that then it growes desperate, and will out face any thing to the uttermost danger.

By the she Apes counsell is shewed, the cure of a true friend, which is then ever most busie, when he sees his companion in danger, and leaves no way unsought that may free him from trouble.

The Fox gave her infinite thanks, and told her shee had bound him (to her) a servant for eber: and in those holie words she had spoken, he had placed his confidence unremovable, and so he laid him down to rest under a Tree in the grasse, till it was

of Reynard the Fox.

was Sun rise: at what time the Otter came unto him and awaked him, and gave him a fat young Duck to eat, saying, Deare Cousin, I have toiled all this night to get this present for you, which I tooke from a Fowler, heare take and eat it, and it shall give you bigour and courage. The Fox gave him manie thanks and said, it was fortunate hantell, and if he



forbided

of Renard the Fox.

Forbided that day, he should finde he would requite it: so the
Fox ate the Duck without bread or saloce, more then his
hunger, and so he dranke foure great draughts of water and
then he went to the place appointed where the Lists stood, with
all his kindred attending on him.

When the King beheld Reynard thus shorne and oyled, he



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said to him: Well For, I see you are carefull of your alone safetie: you respect not beaultie so you escape danger. The For answered not a word, but bowing himselfe downe humbly to the earth, both before the King and the Quenes Majesties, went forth into the Field and at the same time the Wolfe was also readie, and stood boasting, and gibing out many proud and haire-glorious speeches. The Marshals and Rulers of the Lists, were the Lard and the Lasse. These brought forth a booke, on which the Wolfe swoze and maintained his assertion, That the For was a Traytor, and a Murtherer, which he would probe on his bodie, or else he counted a Kereant. Then Reynard took the book, and swoze he lied as ia false Traitor and a Thease, which he would probe on his bodie, or be accounted a Kereant.

When these ceremonies were done, the Marshals of the Field had them doe their deboure. And then every creature avoided the Lists, save dame Rukenaw who stood by the For, and bad him remember the words and instructions she had given him, and call to mind, how when he was scarce seven yeares old, he had then wisdom enough to pisse the darkest night without Lanthorne or candle-light, or the help of the Moone, when any occasion required him: and that his experience was much greater, and his reputation of wisdom more frequent with his companions, : and therefore to worke so as he might win the day, which would be eternall monument to him and his family for ever. To this the For answered (My best Aunt) assure your selfe I will do my best, and not forget an tittle of your counsell, I doubt not but my friends shall reap the hour, and my foes shame by my actions: to this the Ape said Amen, and so departed.

of Renard the Fox.

CHAP. 24.

Of the combat betwix the Fox and the Wolfe, the event, passages and victory.



When none but the Combatants were in the Lists the Wolfe went toward the Fox with infinite rage and furie, and thinking to take the Fox in his forefront, the Fox leapt nimbly from him and the Wolfe pursued him, so that there began a tedious chase betwixen them, on which their friends gazed. The Wolfe taking larger strides then the Fox often overtook him, and lifting up his feet to strike him, the Fox avoided the blow, and smote him on the face with his taile, which was all to be pitt, so that the Wolfe was stricken almost blinde, the pisse smarted so extremly. And he was forced to rest while he glaired his eyes, which advantage when Reynard saw, he scrached up the dust with his feet, and threw it in the eyes of the Wolfe. This grieved him more then the former, so that he durst follow him no longer, for the dust and sand sticking in his eyes smarted so sore,

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that

The pleasant History

that of force he must rub and wash it away, which Reynard seeing, with all the furie he had he ran upon him, and with his teeth gave him three fore wounds on his head, and scolding said: have I hit you, ~~for~~ Wolfe? I will yet hit you bitter, you have killed many a Lamb, and many an innocent Beast, and would impose the fault upon me, but you shall finde the price of your knavery: I am markt to punish thy finnes, and I will give thee thy absolution by and by. It is good thou use patience, for Hell is Purgatory, and thy life is at my mercy. Yet notwithstanding, if thou wilt kneele downe and aske me forgiveness, and confesse thy selfe vanquished (though thou beest the worst thing living) yet I will spare thy life, for my pittie makes me loath to kill thee. These words made Isgrim both mad and desperate, so that he knew not how to expresse his fury, his wounds bled, his eyes smarted, and his whole body was oppressed. So that in the hight of his fury he lift up his foot, and stricke the Fox so great a blow, that he feld him to the ground. But Reynard being nimble, quickly rose up againe and encounterd the Wolfe that between them began a dreadfull and doubtfull combat. The Wolfe was exceeding furious, and ten times he leaped to catch Reynard fast but his skin was so slippery and oylie, he could not hold him. Nay, so wondrously nimble was he in the fight, that when the Wolfe thought to have him surest, he would shift himselfe between his legges And under his bellie, and everie time gave the Wolfe a bite with his teeth, or a swape on the face with his taile, that the poore Wolfe found nothing but dispaire in the conflict, albeit his strength was much the greater.

Thus many wounds and bittings passing on either side, the one expressing cunning, and the other strength, the one fury & the other temperance. In the end the Wolfe being tired, that the battell had continued so long, (for had his feet been sound it had been much longer) he said to himselfe, I will make an end of this combat, for, I know my very weight is able to crush him to pieces, and I lose much of my reputation, to suffer him thus long to contend against me. And this said, he struck the Fox againe so fore a blow on the head with

of Reynard the Fox.

with his foot, that he fell down to the ground, and ere he could recover himself, and arise, he caught him in his feet and threw him under him, lying upon him in such wise, as if he would have prest him to death.



Now began the Fox to be greibouly afraid, and all his friends also, and all Isegrims friends began to shout for joy :

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The Morall

By the Wolves
furious assai-
ling the Fox
and the Foxes
watching and
pursuing of
advantage
shewed, the
folly of rage &
passion, and
the discretion
of temperance
and wisdom,
the first never
bringing any
thing but loss,
the other com-
monly accom-
panied with
honour and
safety; by the
pist taile is ex-
prest the sharp
afflictions with
which wis-
dome ever pu-
nishes rashnes,
and by the
losse of the
Wolves eie is
shewed, that
madnesse and
rage is ever
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blindnesse.
The Wolves
catching the
Fox, and hold-
ing him in his
power shews
that Fortune
sometimes fa-

but the Fox defended himself (as well as he could) with his
clawes, lying a long, and the Wolfe could not hurt him with
his clawes, his feet were so sore, onely with his teeth he snat-
ched at him to bite him, which when the Fox saw, he smote
the Wolfe on the head with his fore-clawes, so that he toze the
skin between his browes, and his ears, and one of his eies hung
out of his head, which put the Wolfe to infinite torment, and
he boyled out extreamlie: then Ilegrim wiping his face, the
Fox took advantage therfore, and with his struggling got upon
his feet.

At which the Wolfe was angrie, and striking after him,
caught the Fox in his armes, and held him fast: in her has
Reynard in so great a strait as then, for at that time great
was their contention, but anger now made the Wolfe forget
his smart: and griping the Fox altogether under him, as Rey-
nard was defending himselfe, his hand light into Ilegrim's
mouth, so that he was in danger to lose it. Then said the
Wolfe to the Fox, now either yeld thy selfe as vanquished,
or else certainly I will kill thee, neither thy dust, thy pisse,
thy mocke, nor any subtil invention shall now save thee, thou
art now left utterlie desperate, and my wounds must have
their satisfaction. When the Fox heard this he thought it was
a hard election, for both brought his ruine. and suddenlie
concluding, he said, Deare Uncle, since fortune commands
me, I yeld to be your servant, and at your commandements
will travel for you to the Holy Land, or any other Pilgri-
mage, or do any service which shall be beneficiall to your soul
or the soule of your fore-fathers: I will doe for the King or
for our holie father the Pope, I will hold of you my Lands and
revenues, and as I, so shall all the rest of my kindred: so that
you shall be a Lord of manye Lords, and none shall dare to
moeve against you: besides, whatsoever I get of Purline,
Gese, Partridges or Plover, flesh, or fish, you, your wife and
children shall have the first choise, ere any come in my belly. I
will ever stand by your side, and wheresoever you goe, no dan-
ger shall come nere you: you are strong, and I amne subtil, we
two joyned together, what force can preballe against us?

Againe

of Reynard the Fox.

Againe, we are so nere in bloud, that nature forbids there should be any enmitie betwene us : I would not have fought against you, had I bene sure of victorie, but that you first appeared me, and then you know of necessity I must do my utmost : I have also in this battell bene curious to you, and not shewed my worst violence, as I would on a stranger, for I know it is the dutie of a Nephew to spare his Uncle : and this you might well perceibe by my running from you, I tell you, it was an action much contrarie to my nature, for I might often have hurt you when I refused, nor are you worse for me, by any thing more then the blemish of your eye for which I am sorrie, and wist it had not hapned : yet there by know that you shall reap rather benefit then lose thereby, for when other Beasts in their sleepe shut thos windowes, you shall shut but one. As for my wife, children and lineage, they shall fall doونه at your feet before you in any presence : therefore I humbly desire you, that you will suffer poore Reynard to live. I know you will kill me, but what will that availe you, when you shall never live in safetie for feare of revengement of my kindred : therefore temperance in any mans wrath is excellent, whereas rashnesse is ever the mother of repentance : but Uncle, I know you to be balliant, wise, and discret, and you rather seeke honoz, peace, and good fame, then bloud and revenge.

Isgrim the Wolfe said, Infinite dissembler, how faine wouldst thou be freed of my servitude : too well I understand thee, and know that if thou were safe on thy feet, thou wouldst forsware this submission : but know all the wealth in the world shall not buy out thy ransom, for thee and thy friends I esteeme them not, nor beleve any thing thou hast uttered : too well I know thee, and am no bird for thy Lime-bush, chaffe cannot deceive me : O how wouldst thou triampe if I should beleve thee, and say I wanted wit to understand thee, but thou shalt know I can look both on this side and beyond thee, thy many decetis used upon me, have now armed me against thee. Thou saist thou hast spared me in the battell : but look upon me, and my wounds will shew how false thou liest, thou

your foolcs
but never
give them
grace to enjoy
the benefit.
The Foxes
flattering of
the Wolfe,
shewes, that
whenever
wisdom is
oppressed, it
hath yet still
one temperate
means or o-
ther, to gaine
his own liber-
ty, and that
faire words do
ever either
vanquish or a-
stonish. Lastly
by the weak
Foxes conqu-
ring the strong
wolfe is shew-
ed, that in all
these accident
of change, nei-
ther force, rage
nor violence
do prevaile so
much as wis-
dome, discreti-
on and tempe-
rate and wary
carriage.

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thou never gapest me a time to breath in, nor wilt I now geve thee a minute to repent in, and the rather when I thinke of the dishonour thou didst to my bed, and how inhumanely thou didst ravish my deare wife Dame Arsewinde.

Now whilst Isgrim was thus talking, the Fox bethought himselfe how he might best get free, and thrusting his other hand betwixt his legges, he caught the Wolfe fast by the stones, and he wzung him so extreemly and hard thereby, that he made him shynke and boyle out with the anguish: then the Fox dzeto his other hand out of his mouth, for the Wolfe was in such wondrous torment, that he had much ado to containe himselfe from sounding: for this torment exceded aboue the paine of his sie, and in the end he fell ober and ober in a swound: then presently Reynard leapt upon him, and dzeto him about the Lists and drag'd him by the legges, and struck, wounded and bit him in many places, so that all the whole feld might take notice thereof.

At this all Isgrims friends were full of sorow, and with great weeping and lamenting went to the King, and prayed him to be pleased to appeale the combat, and take it into his owne hands: which sure the King granted, and then the Lybard and the Lesson (being Marshalls) entered the Lists, and told the Fox and the Wolfe, that the King would speake with them, and that the battell should there end, for he would take it into his owne hands, and determine thereof: as for themselves they had done sufficiently, neither would the King lose either of them: and to the Fox they said, the whole field gave him the victory.

The Fox said, I humbly thanke them, and what pleased my Lord the King to command I am readie to obey, for mine ambition is no further then to be victor, therefore I beseech you let my friends come to attend me, that I may proceed by their advice. They answered it was reason: so presently came forth dame Slopecard and Grimbart her husband dame Rukenaw with her two sisters, Bitelus and Fulrump, her two sonnes, and Malice her daughter, the field spouse, the Wkefell, and aboue an hundred which would not have come

of Reynard the Fox.

If the Fox had lost the conquest: for to him that hath becom, will ever flocke attendants, but to him that is in loss will nothing but contempt follow. Also the Fox came to the Beber, the Otter, & both their wives Pauncerotte, and Ordegale & the Ostrole, the Marri, & the Fitchew, the Firit, the Squi-rell, and a world more then I can name, and all because he was the victor: nay others which befoze had complained of him, were now of nearest kindred; and ready to doe him all service. This is the fashion of the world, he that is rich and in favour, can never be poore or hungry for friendship, every one will seeme to love him, every one will imitate his fashions.



Then was a solemne feast held, Trumpets were sounded, Cornets winded, Shabones, and all instruments warbled, and every one cryed, Praised be Heebem for this glorious conquest. Reynard thanked them all kinly, and received them with great joy and gladnesse: then asked their opinions together he should peld the victory to the King or no: and Dame

Slopard

The pleasant History

Slopard said, yea by all meanes Cousin, for it standes with your honour, noz may you deny it. And (to the Marshals going befoze) they went all to the King, guarding the For on ebery side, all the Trumpets, Pipes and Whistrells sounding befoze him.



of Reynard the Fox.

When Reynard came befoze the king he fell on his knees, and the king bade him stand up, and said to him: Reynard you may well rejoyce, for you have wonne much honour this day, therefore here I discharge you, and set you free, to goe whither your owne will leads you, for all contestations I take upon my selfe, and will have it discust by the wisest of the Kingdome, as soone as Isegrims wounds shall be cured, at what time I will send for you, and so proceed to judgement.

My worthy and dread Lord (said the Fox) I am well appaid with any thing that shall please you: yet when I came first to your Highness Court, there were many malicious persons which sought my life (whom I never injured) but they thought to overcome me, by joyning with my enemies against me, and thinking the wolfe had greater favour then I with your Majesty: this was the ground of their indignation, wherein they shewed their simplicity, not to alter the end which followed,

These men (my Lord) are like a great kennell of Hounds which once I saw standing at a Lords house on a dunghill, where they waited for such as should bring them meat, anon they saw a Hound come out of the kitchen, which had thence brought a goodly rib of Bace: but the Cooke pursuing him, threw hot scalding water after him, and scalded all his hinder parts: but not withstanding away he went to his boyle: but when his fellows perceived him, they called to him, and said: O how much art thou bound to the good Cooke which hath given thee that goodly bone, so well furnished with flesh: but the Dogge replied, You speake according to your knowledge, and praise me in such sort, as you see me befoze with the bone in my mouth: but if you please to looke upon me behind on my buttocks, you shall finde how sorely I payed for it, and they beholding how he was scalded, and all the haire and skinne flayed from his hinder loynes: they began to be agast and amazed at his torment, neither would they any moze of his fellowship, but fled and ranne away from him. In the same sort, my Lord these false and unmothy Beasts, when they are made Lords, possesse their

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their desires, and are mighty and renowned: then doe they
erect, sell and poe the poore and needy and eat them up like
so many hungry Starved Hounds, for they are the dogges with
bones in their mouths, no man dare to meddle with them,
but praise all their actions: no man dare offend them, nay,
many assist and help them in their unfortunall actions, onely
that they may lick their fingers, and be partakers of their ex-
ortions.

¶ (my deare Lord) how can those who goe safely, which
goe thus blindfold: or how can they expect but a shamefull
fall, whose steps are so uncertaine: neither can any man pity
them when their woekes are disclosed, but continuall burres
and upbraidings follow them to the grave with distraction
many of these have lost their harts (which is their friends) as
the Hound did, and have none left to coher their mischiefs
but all forsake them as the Hound did the dogge which was
scalded.

My gracious Lord, I beseech you remember it is moztall ex-
ample: and it will nothing impair the greatnesse of your ver-
tue, for doubtlesse many of these evil exorting creatures are
under your Adjunction both in Townes, Cities, and great
Lords Houses, who but face the poore, and sell away their free-
domes and personages, and threaten things upon them, wch
they never thought, thought or imagined, and all to make up
the Comition-wealthes of their owne particular profits: but
the ends of such are vile, and beaven hath for them a judge-
ment: but of these errors I hope none shall justly accuse me,
nor any of my kindred, but we shall acquite us nobly from the
same, I feare no creatures accusations, for I will ever be the
For though all my foes sweare to the contrary. My Lord you
I adore above all mortall creatures living, nor can any wile-
dome divert me from you, but I will abide by you to the last
gaspe, and though malice have tolde your Highnesse the con-
trary, yet I have ever dissembled them, and so will doe to the
last moment.

of Reynard the Fox.

CHAP. 25.

How the King forgave the Fox all things, and made him
the greatest in his Land, and of his noble returne home
with all his kindred.

THE King said Reynard, you are one that have me ha-
mage and fealty, and I hope I shall ever enjoy it: And for



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your service, here I make you one of the Lords of my privy Counsell. Take heed you doe not any thing unbecomingly for here I place you in all your power and authority as formerly you were, hoping you will administer Justice equally and truly. For as long as you employ your wit unto virtuous actions, so long the Court cannot misse you: for you are a Starre, whose lustre exceeds all other, especially in finding out mischiefs, and preventing them. Therefore remember the Morall you your selfe told me, and be a lover of truth and equitie. From hence forth I will be govern'd by your wisdom, and there shall not breath that creature in any Kingdom which shall doe you injurie, but I will highly revenge it. This you shall proclaim thorough all the nation, and be the chiefeest Governour in the same, for the Office of high Bailiffe here I freely bestow upon you, and I know you may reape great honour thereby.

All Reynards friends and kindred humbly thanked the King, but he told them it was much short of that he intended to doe for their sakes: and advised them all to admonish him, to be carefull of his faith and loyalty. This said Dame Rukewaw, Behold it my Lord, we will not faile in that point, neither feare you the contrarie: for should he prove otherwise, we would renounce him. Then the Fox also thanked the King with faire and courteous words saying: (My gracious Lord) I am not worthy of these high honours you doe me yet will ever study with my service how to deserve them: nor shall my best counsell at any time be wanting. And this said he tooke his humble leave of the King, and so departed with the rest of his friends and kindred.

Whilst these passages hapned, Braine the Wreare, Tibert the Cat, and Arsewind and her children, with the rest of their Linage, dreynt the Wolfe out of the field, and laid him upon soft litter and hay and covered him all over with warme, and dressed his wounds, which were to the number of fife and twenty, by the helpe of many skillfull Leeches and Surgions. His sickness and weaknesse was so great, that his feeling was lost: but they rubbed and chafed him on the temples

of Reynard the Fox:



The Morall.

By these honours done to the Fox by the Lyeer, is shewed that seldom one good fortune cometh without another, and he that hath once achieved fame and renowne, to him wil the world fly, and dignity on dignity shall be heaped up on him: as on the contrary parte, he that is once fallen, ei her in state or reputation, it is a thing of much difficulty to see him advanced without miracle, for worldly men are said to be like
Dges,
which when one of their owne kind is downe: all the rest will fall

ples and under the eyes, till he leapt out of his wound, and howled so loud that all were amazed which heard him: but the Physicians gave him Cordials to drinke, and a doxmire oz potion to make him sleepe. And then comforted his wife telling her there was no danger oz perill of his life. So the Court brake up, and ebery Beast returned to his owne home
Amongst

The pleasant History

upon him and
worry him.
But wise men
or good men
(for both are
scarce) are said
to be ilke
Hogs which
when one of
their kind is
downe all the
rest will pre-
sently assist
and help him

For any thing
else contained
in this Chap-
ter, it is either
Moralized by
the speeches
of the Fox or
else by the
Author.

Amongst the rest Reynard the Fox took his leave of the King and Queene, he desired him not to be long absent from them. To whom he answered, that he would be ever ready at their service, as was his bounden duty, and not himselfe alone, but all his friends and kindred also. And so begging licence of his Majestie in all solemne manner and with faire speech, he departed from the Court.



of Reynard the Fox.

Was neber creature that eber flattered braber oz to better purpose, for he that could doe the like, might be a Master of the eight liberal Science. And no Lord, whether Spiritual or Temporall, but would have an eare open for his language. Nor dyed he without issue, for he hath Childzen almost in all places.

And indeed he that hath no alliance to him in the Art of dissimulation, shall hardly prosper as the world goeth: Though he want his heere, yet if he have his heart it is enough to make him accepted.

Plain dealing is now an exile, and Cobetousnesse and fraud have taken possession of his Tenements: not the Popes Palace, the Court of Emperours, Kings and Princes cannot be exceeded of this error.

Honey is now growne the onely Flavourite of the times, the very Church Idoll, and the Countrey worship: it can purchase all things, defend all things, and confound all things: And mad men trauaile ower the world, to gaine this folly this fashion: Who is not a true Fox, is but a beast of bale estimation.

This is the worlds custome, and what will become of the use, the wise man can hardly judge oz imagine: Onely that these heinous sinnes of falshood, Theft, Murder and Ambition, can neber walke but hand in hand with Judgement: From which I heartily pray that the hand of the Highest will defend us, and make us walke in thole pathes which shall be suitable to vertus and piety. With which I conclude, since these misdeeds are not fit to beame for mee to treat of. And at the last day every one is sure to gibe an account for his own burthen.

With Reynard all his friends and kinsfolks to the number of forty, took their leave also of the King, and went away with the Fox, who was no little glad creature that he had sped well, and stood so farre in the Kings favour: for now he had power enough to aduance whom he pleased, and pull down any that enbied his fortune.

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After some trespall the Fox and all his friends came to his
Borough or Castle of Malepardus, where every one (in noble
and courteous manere) take leave of other, and Reynard did



to every one of them great reverence and thanked them for the
love and honour hee had received from them, protesting ever-
more to remaine their faithfull servant, and to second them in
all

of Reynard the Fox:

all things wherein his life or goods might be abailable unto them: and soooke hands and departed.

Al Fox went in to Dame Ermelin his Wife, who welcomed him with great tendernes: And to her and her Children, he related at large all the wonders which had befallen him at the Court, and mist no title or circumstance therein. Then grew they proud that his Fortune was so excellent: and the Fox spent his dayes from thenceforth (with his Wife and Children) in great joy and content,

Now whosoever shall relate unto you (of the Fox) more or lesse then you have heard: I would not wish you to build any faith upon his reports. Onely this which you have already heard or read, you may beleve at your best pleasure: Or if any refuse, he shall not notwithstanding be accounted an Heretike, since he that onely saw it, may best give credit unto it, and yet many in this world beleve the things they have not seene.

Besides, there are many Playes both Comick and Morall which figure out things that never were, onely to make use or benefit of the example: That men may thereby & better shun Vice, and pursue Vertues. In like manner, this Book, though it containe but matter of jest and sport, yet if hee looke seriously therein, he may haply finde much Morall matter and wisdom, worthy his consideration. Goodnes nor any Good-man shall be finde in it disreputed, for all things are generally spoke, and every man may take his owne part as his Conscience shall instruct him: If any finde himselfe too much oppressed, let him shake it off with amendment: If any be cleare, let him hold on his path, and avoid stumbling: And if any take distaste or offence, let him not blame me, but the Fox, for it is onely his language. But if all things sute to my wisht imaginations, I shall then be encouraged to salute the world with a second part, clad in some neater English deeper matter, and if not more, yet every whit as pleasant Morals.





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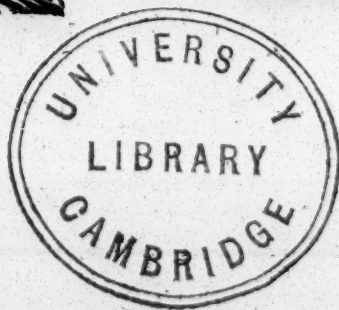
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